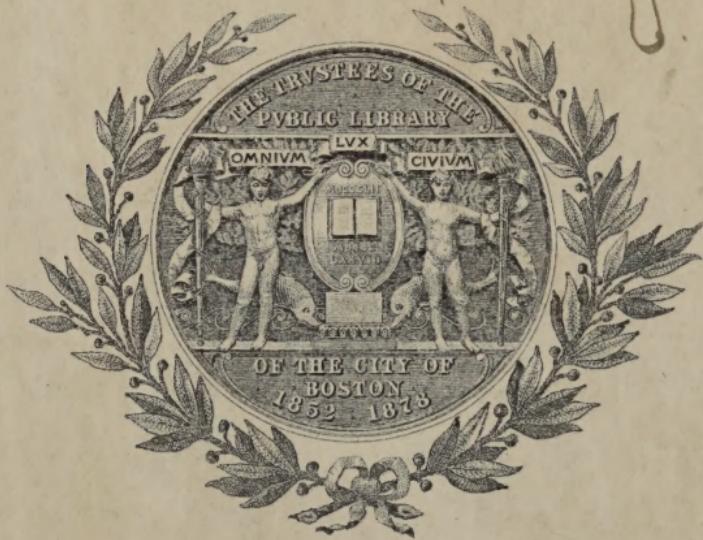




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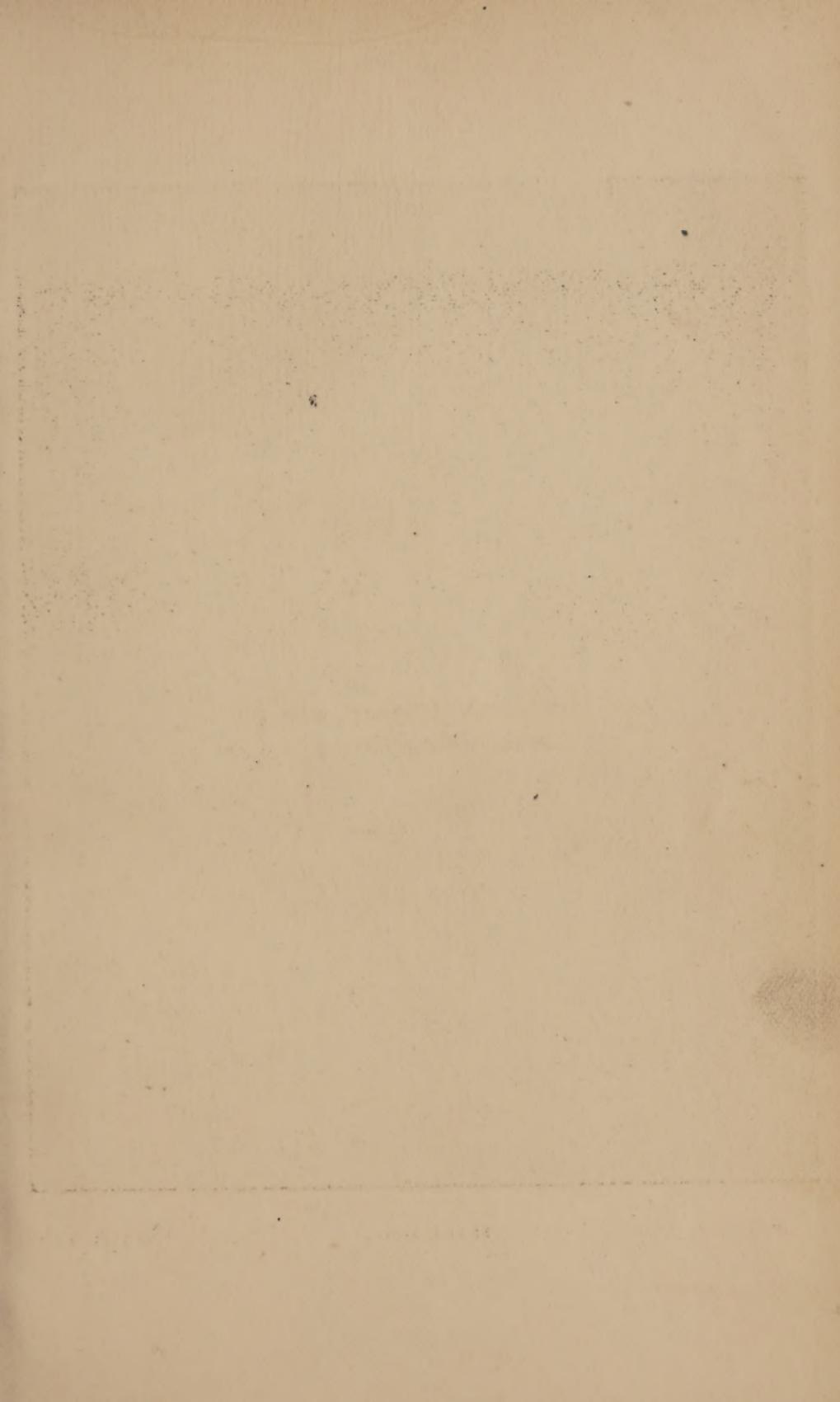


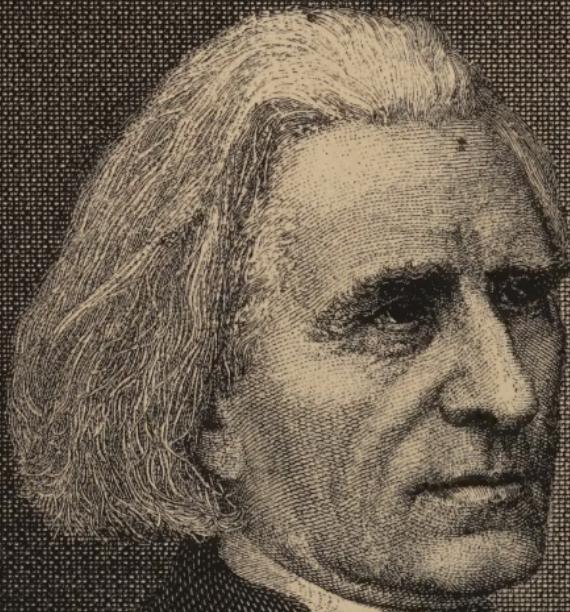




# **MY MUSICAL LIFE.**

“The tides of Music’s golden sea  
Setting towards eternity.”





FRANZ LISZT.



# MY MUSICAL LIFE

1886.

BY THE

REV. H. R. HAWEIS, M.A.,

AUTHOR OF "MUSIC AND MORALS," ETC.,  
"THOUGHTS FOR THE TIMES," "SPEECH IN SEASON," "ARROWS IN THE AIR,"  
"CURRENT COIN," "POETS IN THE PULPIT," "PET," "THE AMERICAN HUMORISTS,"  
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LONDON:

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VRAAGENBLADUM  
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To my Father,

THE REV. J. O. W. HAWEIS, M.A.

(PREBENDARY OF CHICHESTER),

TO WHOSE TIMELY AND THOUGHTFUL EFFORTS

I OWE MY EARLIEST MUSICAL TRAINING,

 Dedicate

THESE LATER STUDIES OF MY LEISURE HOURS.



## PRELUDE.

---

PARABLES OF THE GOLDEN SEA

THE TIDAL WAVES BEAT UPON THE SHORES OF THE AGES

THEY ARE THE WAVES OF HUMAN FEELING

THE EBB AND FLOW OF EMOTION

TIMING THE PULSES OF THE HEART

THE WINDS RISE AND FALL

THE FITFUL BREATH OF PASSION

THE BLAST OF POWER

THE SIGH OF RAPTURE THE SWOON OF DEATH

THE CLOUDS GATHER AND PASS

PROPHETS OF SORROW HERALDS OF TEMPEST

SHADOWS OF PAIN AND LOSS

JOY LIES A LONELY WRECK

AND GRIEF IS LOUD

AND THE NIGHT IS FILLED WITH STARS

BUT THE MORNING BREAKS

AND BEYOND THE SEA AND THE CLOUD RACK

GLOWS THE IMPENETRABLE BLUE

I STAND ON THE SHORE AND UTTER

PARABLES OF THE GOLDEN SEA



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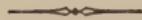
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First Book.



EARLY DAYS.





## First Book.

### EARLY DAYS.

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#### I.

NORWOOD AND LONDON.

1846-1850.

**L**THINK it was Lord Beaconsfield who said that a man was usually interesting in proportion as his talk ran upon what he was familiar with ; and that as a man usually knew more about himself than about anything else, he seldom failed to be tolerable if his self-centred talk turned out to be unaffected and sincere. To talk about one's self and to be dull is nevertheless possible. In the early pages of this volume I shall have to do the first to a considerable extent ; let me hope to avoid the second.

1.  
SELF.

*My Musical Life* is a companion volume to *Music and Morals*.<sup>2</sup> That book made me many friends, and, I hope, few enemies. The public was kind, and the publishers were liberal. *Music and Morals* is now (1883) in its 12th edition.

Music is not the business of my life, but it remains its sweetest recreation; and there is one opinion which used to be widely held by my friends in the old days, and to which I subscribed for many years. Nature, they often said, intended me for a violinist. In fact, my musical life starts from the violin; and, "Stradivario duce"—Stradivarius leading the way—I feel inspired, "after long years," to retrace with a certain keen pleasure these labyrinthine passages of Musical Memory.

There is something about the shape of a violin—its curves, its physiognomy, its smiling and genial S's—which seems to invite and welcome inspection and handling.

TARISIO, the Italian carpenter, came under this fascination to good purpose. He began by mending old fiddles; he played himself a little; he got more enamoured of these mysterious, lifeless yet living companions of his solitude, until he began to "trade in fiddles."<sup>3</sup>

At the beginning of this century, hidden away in old Italian convents and wayside inns, lay the masterpieces of the AMATI, STRADIVARIUS, the GUARNERII, and BERGONZI, almost unknown and little valued. But TARISIO's eye was getting cultivated. He was learning to know a fiddle when he saw it.

"Your violino, signor, requires mending?" says the itinerant pedlar, as he salutes some monk or padre known to be connected with the sacristy or choir of Pisa, Florence, Milan. "I can mend it."

Out comes the Stradivarius, with a loose bar or a split rib, and sounding abominably.

"Dio mio!" says TARISIO, "and all the blessed saints! but your violino is in a bad way. My respected father is prayed to try one that I have, in perfect and beautiful accord and repair; and permit me to mend this worn-out machine."

And TARISIO, whipping a shining, clean instrument out of his bag, hands it to the monk, who eyes it and is for trying it. He tries it; it goes soft and sweet, though not loud and wheezy, like the battered old Strad. TARISIO clutches his treasure.

The next day back comes the pedlar to the cloister, is shown up to the padre, whom he finds scraping away on his loan fiddle.

"But," he exclaims, "you have lent me a beautiful violino and in perfect order."

"Ah! if the father would accept from me a small favour," says the cunning TARISIO.

"And what is that?"

"To keep the violin that suits him so well, and I will take in exchange the old machine which is worn out, but with my skill I shall still make something of it!"

A glass of good wine, or a lemonade, or black coffee, clinches the bargain. Off goes TARISIO, having parted with a characterless German fiddle—sweet and easy-going and "looking nice," and worth now about £5—in perfect order, no doubt,—and having secured one of those gems of Cremona which now run into £300. Violin-collecting became the passion of TARISIO's life. The story has been told by MR. CHARLES READE, and all the fiddle-world knows how TARISIO came to Paris with a batch of old instruments, and was taken up by CHANOT and VUILLAUME, through whose hands passed nearly every one of those *chefs-d'œuvre* recovered by TARISIO in his wanderings, which now are so eagerly contended for by English and American millionaires, whenever they happen to get into the market.

I have heard of a mania for snuff-boxes—it was old LABLACHE's hobby. There are your china-maniacs, and your picture-maniacs, and your old-print connoisseurs who only look at the margin, and your old-book-hunters who only glance at the title-page and edition, and your coin-collectors, and your gem-collectors, who

are always being taken in; but for downright fanaticism and "gone-cooniness," if I may invent the word, commend me to your violin-maniac. He who once comes under that spell, goes down to the grave with a disordered mind.

I said that I was, perhaps, intended for a violinist by nature. I can understand TARISIO's passion, though I never

4. followed out that particular branch of it which  
FIDDLE led him to collect, repair, and sell. I could  
SHOPS. not buy violins—the prices have risen since

the days of the Italian pedlar. I could not cheat people out of them; the world was too knowing for that,—and then I was too virtuous. I could not "travel" in violins. It was not my vocation; and one may in these days go far and get little—for it is now about as easy to find a STRADIVARIUS as a CORREGGIO. But long before I had ever touched a violin I was fascinated with its appearance. In driving up to town as a child—when, standing up in the carriage, I could just look out of the window—certain fiddle shops hung with mighty rows of violoncellos attracted my attention. I had dreams of these large editions—these patriarchs of the violin, as they seemed to me. I compared them in my mind with the smaller tenors and violins. I dreamed about their brown, big, dusty bodies and affable good-natured-looking heads and grinning  $\S\ \&$ 's. These violin shops were the great points watched for on each

journey up to London from Norwood, where I spent my early days.

We passed through Kennington. Sometimes we used to stop at a friend's house overlooking the common. He was

old, quaint, and musical. His name was DR.

<sup>5.</sup> DR. MAITLAND—the celebrated author of *The Dark Ages*. An organ, with black keys where the

MAITLAND. piano's are white, and white where the piano's are black, stood in the hall. This instrument was atrociously out of tune, but I used always to pump it full of wind whenever I got the chance, and let off as many of the discordant pipes as possible before I could be stopped. The old gentleman had a fiddle, and a couple of friends used sometimes to look in and bring theirs, and they played HASSE's and CORELLI's trios. I remember at that early age discovering the rudiments of the then famous JULLIEN'S "Bridal Waltz" in a movement of old HASSE. Considering the great dearth of respectable violin music for beginners, I have often wondered why those simple and severe gigues and sarabands are not more often utilised. In any sale of old music, or at second-hand music-shops, certain neatly-bound, though time-worn and time-honoured "sets," can still be picked up. Though stiff and formal, as it were, with starched frills and periwigs and powder, what richness of idea, what elegant form, what severe development! Men were feeling their way into the paradise of modern music;

but all was new to them ; they do not disguise it, the naïve delight in effects repeated again and again with consummate gravity and gusto, *because* they were new, the placid contentment with a simple flowing bit of melody, and the frequent employment of the *perfect cadence*, in season and out of season, reminding one that only 333 years had passed away since Monteverde had laid the foundation of modern music by that famous discovery.\*

To a *blasé* world it is refreshing to go back and keep company with those old pioneers of art, and realise sympathetically with them the joy of doing a thing for

6. **THE FIRST TIME.** the first time! What heights and depths are there in those three short monosyllables! The first time your soul has thrilled to eloquence, the first time a poetical thought has kindled you, the first time you noticed the charm of a woman's society, the first time your pulses quickened at her approach, the first time you found a congenial friend, the first time you perceived in colour and sound something which went beyond the eye or the ear and became the interpreter of the soul. The joy of the explorer as he sails into an unknown sea, the ecstasy of the astronomer as a new planet floats into the telescope, the thrill of the experimentalist who combines with a new result substances which from the beginning of time have never been thus brought together, the glow of the historian

\* See *Music and Morals*, Second Book, "From Ambrose to Handel."

when, after poring over his facts, the meaning of them dawns upon him, and a theory is born once and for ever which is destined to introduce order and meaning into what before was chaos !

Youth is the great season of surprises, as it certainly is of delights. There never were such buttercup fields and strawberry ices as in the days of my childhood. Men

7

THE GREAT EXHIBITION OF 1851. try to make hay now, but it is poor work ; and

as for the modern ices, they are either frozen amiss or ill-mixed. They are not good enough for me, who can remember what they were in the Exhibition of 1851. One of my keenest musical impressions is connected with that marvellous show. I shall never see such another. As I stood in the gallery of the great crystal transept and looked down upon a spectacle such has been witnessed since, but had never before been seen, a feeling of intoxication—there is no other word for it—came over me. That moving thronging mass of gaily-dressed people below, fading away into the distance, the sunshine that filled that opaline building, the glittering sheen reflected from a million facets as of diamonds, flecking with rainbow hues the vapours which dimmed the long perspective. The murmur of that echoing, moving throng beneath, is still in my ears ; it mingles with the splashing of fountains that rose from vast shining basins and radiant cones amid tropical foliage. The Oriental stalls, the hangings, the gaudy red flags white

lettered, the decorated produce of many Nations arranged in what appeared to me to be magic grottoes of marvellous wealth and beauty ; the snowy statues, many of them colossal, standing out in bold relief against green palms, or Eastern cloth of gold, or crimson and azure tapestries—all this rises before me as I write.

I remember perfectly well falling into a kind of dream as I leant over the painted iron balcony and looked down on this splendid vista. The silver-bell-like tones of

<sup>8.</sup>  
*A TRANCE.* an Erard—it was the 1,000 guinea piano—pierced through the human hum, and noise of splashing waters, but it was a long way off. Suddenly, in the adjoining gallery, the large organ broke out with a blare of trumpets that thrilled and riveted me with an inconceivable emotion. I knew not then what those opening bars were. Evidently something martial, festal, jubilant, and full of triumph. I listened and held my breath to hear MENDELSSOHN'S “Wedding March” for the first time, and not know it ! To hear it when half the people present had never heard of MENDELSSOHN, three years after his death, and when not one in a hundred could have told me what was being played—that is an experience I shall never forget. As successive waves of fresh inexhaustible inspiration flowed on, vibrating through the building without a check or a pause, the peculiar Mendelssohnian spaces of cantabile melody alternating as they do in that march with

the passionate and almost fierce decision of the chief processional theme, I stood riveted, bathed in the sound as in an element. I felt ready to melt into those harmonious yet turbulent waves and float away upon the tides of "Music's golden sea setting towards Eternity." The angel of TENNYSON'S Vision might have stood by me whispering,

And thou listenest the lordly music flowing from the illimitable years.

Someone called me, so I was told afterwards, but I did not hear. They supposed that I was following, they went on, and were soon lost in the crowd. Presently one came back and touched me, but I did not feel. I could not be roused, my soul was living apart from my body. When the music ceased the spell slowly dissolved, and I was led away still half in dreamland. For long years afterwards the "Wedding March," which is now considered *banale* and clap-trap by the advanced school, affected me strangely. Its power over me has almost entirely ceased. It is a memory now more than a realisation—

eheu! fugaces, Posthume,  
Posthume, labuntur anni—

This was in 1851 ; but it must have been about the year

9. 1846 that I was taken up to a concert at Exeter

THE Hall, and heard there for the first time what

"MIDSUMMER seemed to me to be music of unearthly sweetness.  
NIGHT'S DREAM." The room was crowded. I was far behind. I

could only see the fiddle-sticks of the band in the distance.

Four long-drawn-out tender wails on the wind rising, rising; then a soft, rapid, flickering kind of sound, high up in the treble clef, broke from a multitude of fiddles, ever growing in complexity as the two fiddles at each desk divided the harmonies amongst them, pausing as the deep melodious breathing of wind instruments suspended in heavy slumbrous sighs their restless agitation, then recommencing till a climax was reached, and the whole band broke in with that magnificent subject which marks the first complete and satisfying period of musical solution in the overture to the "Midsummer Night's Dream!" .

I was at once affected as I had never before been. I did not know then that it was the MENDELSSOHN mania that had come upon me. It seized upon the whole musical world of forty years ago, and discoloured the taste and judgment of those affected, for every other composer. The epidemic lasted for about twenty years at its height; declined rather suddenly with the growing appreciation of SCHUMANN, the tardy recognition of SPOHR, and the revival of SCHUBERT, receiving its *quietus* of course with the triumph of WAGNER. People *now* "place" MENDELSSOHN, *then* they worshipped him. Can I forget the heavenly close of that dream overture that day? MR. WILLY—that capital *chef d'orchestre*, so strict, so true, so sympathetic—was leading the band. The enchanting master, who was to pass away in the following year, FELIX MENDELSSOHN, was still alive. He might have been in London at the time. It was the very year he

conducted the “Elijah” at Birmingham. His works, at the moment when he was to be taken from us for ever, were being played in all the concert rooms in London; the D Minor and C Minor trios, his pianoforte concertos, the “Ruy Blas,” the overture to the “Midsummer Night’s Dream.” That day the band played with a freshness and sympathy which made their own intense delight contagious. I can never hear the heavenly sleep-music at the close of the overture—which some dull people declare is borrowed from Weber—without the memory of those indescribable sensations carrying me back to that day in Exeter Hall.

When I heard the “Wedding March” later in 1851, without knowing whose or what it was, I had the same feeling. My

10 spirit unconsciously saluted the genius who was  
THE MENDELSSOHN destined to rule my musical aspirations for  
SPELL nearly thirty years. I was no doubt very young and ignorant and inexperienced. I was scraping HASSE, CORELLI, and modern opera tunes on a very bad fiddle at home. “La Pluie des Perles” and “La Tenerezza,” and such-like pianoforte trifles of the period, seemed to me delicious, and HENRI HERZ’s noisy firework-variations struck me as sublime. When STERNDALE BENNETT sat down to the piano one day and played two or three of the “Songs without Words,” then great novelties, my perception failed me. I thought nothing of them nor of him. It was some years before I learned to prefer such

pianoforte masterpieces to the showy and ephemeral schools of CZERNY, HERZ, and THALBERG. Why I was so instantly won by the overture to the "Midsummer Night's Dream," and so insensible at first to the "Songs without Words," is to me a riddle. After the first hearing of the overture I became a confirmed Mendelssohnian. I next heard "I would that my love," sung by two boys at the Brighton College, and I could listen to nothing else that night.

In 1847 I was staying at a house where the overture to the "Midsummer Night's Dream" was played as a pianoforte

duet. It is arranged *à quatre mains* by MEN-

11. THE YEAR DELSSOHN himself. Every evening it was my  
1847. unspeakable delight to listen to it. The world

at large was not then much excited about MENDELSSOHN—no one spoke of him out of certain musical cliques, and I was not in the cliques—but my curiosity was intensely excited; every scrap of news about him I fell upon eagerly. In those days I never read the papers. I never knew when MENDELSSOHN was in England; no one ever told me about the "Elijah" at Birmingham in 1846. No one took me to see or hear MENDELSSOHN when he was playing and conducting in London. Everything in this world seems unimportant until all is too late. The angels come in and the angels go out, but we never know them until they have withdrawn themselves from us. Then we look up to heaven, and our eyes fill with burning bitter tears.

One night, just as the last notes of that overture had been struck on the piano, the door opened—it was at

12. Guildford—someone came in with a newspaper

MEN-  
DELSSOHN'S  
DEATH. —“MENDELSSOHN is dead.” “Dead!” echoed

the girl who had been playing the treble, her hand falling from the white keys as though suddenly paralysed—“dead!” She rose from the piano and walked to the other end of the room. I was watching her. I had desolate thoughts of my own. “I shall never see him now,” I thought; “he will make no more music.” The girl came back. She was silent and agitated; she could not control her emotion, and she left the room hurriedly. Others were there, but none seemed to feel it as she did, or as I did. It was news to them; to us it was a calamitous, irreparable, personal loss. Boys don’t weep on these occasions, but I had my own thoughts, and I could understand another’s.

From that day MENDELSSOHN became my patron saint in music. I used to see his face in dreams, transfigured,

13. splendid with inspired thought. He would come

MY VISIONS  
OF MEN-  
DELSSOHN. to me and smile, and speak kind words. I

seemed then to have known him long, his step was familiar, the long tapering fingers of his beautiful white hand—that perfect hand of which MR. CHAPPELL has an exact cast—his slight figure, his wavy, sunny hair, his noble forehead, his large gentle eyes beaming with a certain

child-like fondness, full of unconscious simplicity, flashing at times with a fire so intense that it seemed to burn into the soul of every man in the orchestra. It was matter of common remark that when MENDELSSOHN conducted a perfectly sympathetic band, he would at times almost cease to move the *bâton*. Then, with his head a little on one side, himself listening like one entranced, his spirit alone seemed to sway the musicians, who followed every inflexion vibrating to every pulse of his meaning, as though he had placed them under some strange kind of magnetic control.

This recurrent vision of my companionship with MENDELSSOHN—the impossibility of believing him to be dead, our frequent and strange meeting in the land of dreams—remains one of the sweetest illusions of my early youth.

I never meet him now. I never see him. He never comes to me. Whenever I think of him, I think not of the living MENDELSSOHN of my dreams, but of the placid head lying pillow'd in its last sleep as sketched by his friend, and since engraved. The summer wind seems stirring amongst the branches that wave close by, and underneath are written those words from the "Elijah" which he selected and set, not long before his death, to the divinest music, "And after the fire a still small voice, 'And in that still voice onward came the Lord' . . ."

\* \* \* \* \*

As my ideas group themselves most naturally about my favourite instrument—the violin—I may as well resume

the thread of my narrative in connection with my earliest violin recollections. I became possessed, at the age of six years, of a small red eighteenpenny fiddle and stick, with that flimsy bow and those thready strings, which are made apparently only to snap, even as the fiddle is made only to smash. I thus early became familiar with the idol of my youth. But familiarity did not breed contempt. I proceeded to elicit from the red eighteenpenny all it had to give; and when I had done with it, my nurse removed the belly, and found it made an admirable dust-pan or wooden shovel for cinders, and, finally, excellent firewood. Many went that way, without my passion for toy fiddles suffering the least decline; nay, it rather grew by that it (and the fire) fed on. It may not be superfluous to add that I had by this time found means to make the flimsiest strings yield up sounds which I need not here characterise, and to such purpose that it became a question of some interest how long such sounds could be endured by the human ear. I do not mean my own. All violinists, including infants on eighteenpennies, admit that to their own ear the sounds produced are nothing but delightful; it is only those who do not make them who complain. As it seemed unlikely that my studies on the violin would stop, it became expedient that they should be directed. A full-sized violin was procured me. I have every reason to believe it was one of the worst fiddles I ever saw.

I had played many times with much applause, holding a full-sized violin between my knees. I was about eight years old when the services of the local organist—a 15.  
FIRST MR. INGRAM, of Norwood—were called in. His LESSONS. skill on the violin was not great, but it was enough for me; too much, indeed, for he insisted on my holding the violin up to my chin. The fact is, he could not play it in any other position himself, so how could he teach me? Of course the instrument was a great deal too large; but I strained and stretched until I got it up; for as it would not grow down to me, I had to grow up to it. And here I glance at the crucial question, Ought young children to begin upon small-sized violins? All makers say “Yes”; naturally, for they supply the new violins of all sizes. But I emphatically say “No.” The sooner the child gets accustomed to the right violin intervals the better; the small violins merely present him with a series of wrong distances, which he has successively to unlearn. It is bad enough if in after years he learns the violoncello or tenor. Few violinists survive that ordeal, and most people who take to the tenor or 'cello after playing the violin keep to it. Either they have not been successful on the violin, or they hope to become so on its larger though less brilliant relation; but they have a perfectly true instinct that it is difficult to excel on both, *because of the intervals*. Yet, in the face of this, you put a series of violins of different sizes into the pupil's hand, on the ground that,

as his hand enlarges with years, the enlarged key-board will suit his fingers better; but that is not the way the brain works—*the brain learns intervals*. It does not trouble itself about the size of the fingers that have got to stretch them. A child of even seven or eight can stretch most of the ordinary intervals on a full-sized violin finger-board. He may not be able to hold the violin to his chin; but he can learn his scales and pick out tunes, sitting on a stool and holding his instrument like a violoncello. Before the age of eight I found no difficulty in doing this. But the greater the difficulty the better the practice. The tendons cannot be too much stretched short of spraining and breaking. Mere aching is to be made no account of; the muscles can hardly be too much worked. A child will soon gain surprising agility, even on a large finger-board. Avoid the hateful figured slip of paper that used to be pasted on violin finger-boards in my youth, with round dots for the fingers. I remember tearing mine off in a fit of uncontrollable irritation. I found it very difficult, with the use of my eyes, to put my fingers on the dots, and even then the note was not always in tune, for of course the dot might be covered in a dozen ways by the finger-tips, and a hair's breadth one way or the other would vary the note. But the principle is vicious. A violin player's eyes have no more business with his fingers than a billiard player's eyes have with his cue. He looks at the ball, and the musician, if he looks at anything, should look at the notes, or at his

audience, or he can shut his eyes if he likes. It is his ears, not his eyes, have to do with his fingers.

I was about eight years old. My musical studies were systematic, if not well directed. Every morning for two hours I practised scales and various tunes at a double desk, my father on one side and I on the other. We played the most deplorable arrangements, and we made the most detestable noise. We played BEETHOVEN's overture to "Prometheus," arranged for two fiddles, CALLCOTT's German melodies with piano-forte accompaniment, and without the violoncello part, and CORELLI's trios—also without the third instrument. I had somehow ceased to take lessons now. My father's knowledge of violin playing was exactly on a level with my own ; his skill, he modestly owned, was even less, but had it not been for him I never should have played at all. Our method was simple. We sat for two hours after breakfast and scraped. In the evening, with the addition of the piano, we scraped again—anything we could get hold of—and we did get hold of odd things : LOCKE's music to "Macbeth," old quadrilles, the "Battle of Prague," "God save the Emperor," and the "Huntsman's Chorus." I confess I hated the practising, it was simple drudgery—and put it in what way you will, the early stage of violin playing *is* drudgery—but it must be gone through with. And then I had my hours of relaxation. I used to walk up and down

16.  
EARLY  
PRACTICE.

the lawn in our garden playing tunes in my own fashion. I got very much at home on the finger-board, and that is the grand thing after all. No one ever gets at home there who has not begun young—not so young as I began, but at least under the age of twelve. I was soon considered an infant phenomenon on the violin, stood on tables, and was trotted out at parties, and I thus early got over all shyness at playing in public.

About this time I received a decided impulse from hearing a little girl, aged six, play on the violin exquisitely, and, as

17. it seemed to me, prodigiously. There were  
A NEW three sisters, named TURNER; the eldest was  
IMPULSE. only fifteen: two played the harp, and the youngest, a pretty child of six, played the violin. She had one of those miniature instruments—I believe a real Cremona—which can still occasionally be picked up at old violin shops. I remember the enthusiasm she created in some variations on airs from “*Sonnambula*,” an opera in which JENNY LIND was making furor at the time in London. The poor little violinist was recalled again and again. It was past eleven, and as she came on in her little pink dress just down to her knees—holding her tiny fiddle—I recollect her raising it to her chin to begin again, but her little head lay so wearily on one side, and she looked so tired that her acute father came forward, perceiving that the child was quite worn out, drew her away, and in a few words

asked the people to let her off, adding that she ought to have been in bed an hour ago. I went home and tried those variations. I could not play them, but her playing of them gave me a new start. The finest lesson a young player can have is to hear good playing. So my father thought. We had both come to a kind of standstill in our music. We seemed, as he expressed it, to have *stuck*.

It now happily occurred to him to subscribe to certain quartet concerts then announced to take place at Willis's Rooms. In those days such things were novelties. With the exception of ELLA's Musical Union, then in its early days, I believe no public quartets had been given in London, except perhaps as a rare feature in some chamber concert.

SAINTON and PIATTI were then in their prime. I remember them as young men with their hair jet-black. My father

18. wrote to M. SAINTON and asked whether he could

SAINTON,  
PIATTI,  
HILL,  
COOPER. admit me as a child half-price? M. SAINTON  
wrote back with the utmost politeness to say

that to make such a reduction was not in accordance with their rule, but that under the circumstances he should be glad to conform to my father's wishes, especially as my father's sacred office—that of a clergyman—always inspired him with the greatest respect. Accordingly I went. These were amongst the choicest performances I heard in my boyhood. Nor, in some respects, have they ever been excelled in London since. What a quartet caste

that was! SAINTON, HILL, PIATTI, and COOPER. SAINTON, full of fire, brilliancy, and delicacy. COOPER with more tone, and a depth and passion which sometimes gave him the advantage over his brilliant French rival; but at the end of each concert we were always left balancing the merits of the two violinists, I inclining at times to the Englishman's fervour and *abandon*, but won back by the Frenchman's finish and execution. In SPOHR's violin duets each had an opportunity for the display of his peculiar gift. Each was on his mettle; each gave his own reading to the same phrases in turn, and this friendly artistic rivalry was to me intensely exciting. HILL was a splendid tenor, full, round, and smooth in tone; and of PIATTI, prince of violoncellists, it is needless here to speak. Willis's Rooms were never full on these occasions; the "Monday Populairs" had not yet cultivated the public taste up to chamber music of the classical sort. In that field PROFESSOR ELLA, with his Musical Union, had hitherto laboured alone. But everyone at Willis's Rooms was appreciative. The players all seemed to feel the atmosphere sympathetic and genial. Everyone played heartily, and the artists were the very best that could be got.

At each concert some bright particular star appeared as a soloist. I remember a fair-haired girl—fragile and apparently with no physique to commend attention on a grand pianoforte in a large

room. She came in a light blue muslin dress; sat down hurriedly, and tossed her curls back, looking straight up at the ceiling, whilst her fingers ran quickly in a slight prelude over the keys; then she plunged into a polonaise—or something of the kind; it might have been one of poor CHOPIN's; it probably was, for he was about that time the rage, and quite in the last stage, dying of consumption in London and Scotch drawing-rooms, catching fresh colds every night, faultlessly attired in the miserable dress clothes and exposed shirt-front of the period. General attention had not then been called to his music, but about that time it was beginning to be fashionable in London, which in such matters tardily followed Paris, where CHOPIN had long been adored. I have since been told that MDLLE. CLAUSS—afterwards SZAVARDY CLAUSS—was cold and mechanical. I only heard her that once, and that was at Willis's Rooms, in, I believe, 1849. We did not think her cold then. From the moment she sat down until she sprang up with that same little flustered, uneasy manner which I noticed on her entrance, our eyes were riveted upon her, and we followed every bar and inflexion of the rapid execution. She seemed to play her piece through—as I have sometimes heard RUBINSTEIN—without taking breath, and we were forced to hold ours: as the artists sometimes say of a picture, “It is painted with one brush,” so MDLLE. CLAUSS, never relaxed her mood or her grip; she held her composer and her audience absolutely fast until she had done with

both ; then she seemed to push both away like one eager to escape.

On a certain afternoon there was neither solo pianist nor violinist down on the programme, but a player on the *contre-*

*basso* was to occupy the vacant place. I remem-

20.

BOTTESINI.

ber my disappointment. Who is that tall, sallow-looking creature with black moustache and straight hair, with long bony fingers, yet withal a comely hand, who comes lugging a great double-bass with him ? Someone might have lifted it up for him ; but no, he carries it himself and hoists it lovingly on to the platform. He seems familiar with its ways, and will allow no one to help him. Why, there are SAINTON, HILL, PIATTI, and COOPER, all coming on without their fiddles. They seem vastly interested in this ungainly couple—the man and the big bass. He has no music. People behind me are standing up to get a better sight of him, although he is tall enough in all conscience. I had better stand up too ; they are standing up in front of me, I shall see nothing !—so I stood on a chair. The first curiosity over, we all sat down, and, expecting little but a series of grunts, were astonished at the outset at the ethereal notes lightly touched on the three thick strings, *harmonics* of course, just for tuning. But all seemed exquisitely in tune with the piano.

This man was BOTTESINI, then the latest novelty. How he bewildered us by playing all sorts of melodies in flute-like

harmonics, as though he had a hundred nightingales caged in his double-bass! Where he got his harmonic sequences from; how he hit the exact place with his long, sensitive, ivory-looking fingers; how he swarmed up and down the finger-board, holding it round the neck at times with the grip of a giant, then, after eliciting a grumble of musical thunder, darting up to the top and down again, with an expression on his face that never seemed to alter, and his face always calmly and rather grimly surveying the audience; how his bow moved with the rapidity of lightning, and his fingers seemed, like Miss Kilmansegg's leg, to be a judicious compound of clockwork and steam: all this, and more, is now a matter of musical history, but it was new then. I heard him play the "*Carnival de Venice*." I have heard him play it and some three or four other solos since at intervals of years. His stock seemed to me limited; but when you can make your fortune with half a dozen, or even a couple of solos, why play more? At one time he travelled with LAZARUS, the matchless clarionet player; and I shall long remember the famous duet they invariably played, and which was always encored. Then BOTTESINI was fond of conducting and of composing. He got a good appointment in Egypt, and I suppose got tired of going "around" playing the same solos. I never wearied of his consummate grace and finish, his fatal precision, his heavenly tone, his fine taste. One sometimes yearned for a touch of human imperfection, but he was like a dead shot: he never

missed what he aimed at, and he never aimed at less than perfection.

Another afternoon there came on a boy with a shock head of light hair, who was received with a storm of applause.

21.

**THE BOY JOACHIM.** He was about sixteen, and held a violin. His name was JOACHIM.

He laid his head upon his Cremona, lifted his bow arm, and plunged into such a marvellous performance of BACH's "Chaconne" as was certainly never before heard in London. The boy seemed to fall into a dream in listening to his own complicated mechanism. He shook out the notes with the utmost ease and fluency. It all seemed no trouble to him, and left him quite free to contemplate the masterpiece which he was busy in interpreting. MENDELSSOHN, after hearing him play the same masterpiece on one occasion, caught him in his arms and embraced him before the audience.

I heard few concerts, and those usually of a poor sort, but I was ravenous for music, and each performance made

an indelible impression upon my mind. I re-

22.  
**HULLAH.**

member the very rooms—the "Horns" at Kennington, the dining-room at the Beulah Spa, Upper Norwood, a school-room at Brixton, our own school-room at Lower Norwood—where MR. HULLAH—looking (in 1846) very much as he does now (1883)—used occasionally to appear to superintend the classes on his then novel

system. He usually, however, sent MR. MAY, a very nice-looking young man, whom I have since met in London, and who is now “the same age as other people.”

We used to trudge, my father, my sister, and self, through the snow to these classes. It was not an unmixed delight, like so many other things in this world that are so good for us. I wore socks and shoes, and my legs were bare to my knees. I invariably forgot my gloves, and my hands and legs were always blue with cold. MR. HULLAH himself was looked up to with a certain awe. He was a very great and celebrated man, but his affability in speaking to my father was surprising. I can remember his genial, kindly face ; and his manner with children was quite gentle and friendly, considering who he was. But withal he was very business-like and systematic—and would have no nonsense.

About this time I heard MISS DOLBY, then in her prime. How she did sing “Bonny Dundee,” accompanying herself!

What a voice ! what a *bonhomie* ! Always the

<sup>23.</sup> MISS DOLBY. true artiste, the estimable woman, the earnest

worker. She had deserved her popularity, and retained her hold over the public longer than most singers. For how many years was she without a rival in oratorio ! It would not be right to say that she “created” “O rest in the Lord,” but it is true to say that for years the song was identified with her rendering of it, and that no subsequent singer has forsaken that rendering with any success.

Some have over-hurried it, and some have over-declared it. I have heard it actually preached at the people—an inexpressibly offensive method; but Miss DOLBY hit the happy mean, with the truest perception of the right functions of oratorio art. She seemed personally filled with finely chastened but deep emotion, and she gave herself up to the expression of it *in the presence of others*, but not *at them*. She knew she was being over-heard and she expected sympathy; but she was not engaged in a propaganda, and did not aim at forcing conviction.

When Miss DOLBY married M. SAINTON, the world of art rejoiced over the union of two persons who had already passed a considerable portion of their busy lives in the service of the English people, and with that simple-minded devotion to the highest interests of the musical art which has done so much to raise the social status of musicians and ennable the cause of music in England.

About this time I heard JULLIEN'S band at the Surrey Zoological Gardens. The siege of Gibraltar was going on

24. at night, with explosions and fireworks of incon-

ceivable splendour; the great cardboard ships

MONS. JULLIEN. looked quite real to me—they were blown to pieces every evening—and the fort, with the sentinels pacing up and down on the ramparts, as large as life. The band played in a covered alcove not far from the water's brink. The effect on a summer's evening was delightful. JULLIEN'S

enormous white waistcoat and heavily gilt arm-chair made a good centre. I can see his large, puffy, pale face and black moustache now, as he lolled back exhausted in the gorgeous fauteuil; then sprang up, full of fire, patted the solo cornet on the shoulder with “Pratiquez!” I happened to overhear him. “Pratiquez, il faut toujours pratiquez.” BOTTESEINI also played there in the still summer evenings, with magical effect, accompanied by JULLIEN’s band. Days and nights of my childhood, what music! what fireworks!

At this time JENNY LIND and ERNST were both in London; and LISZT, I believe, passed through like a meteor. I never

heard any of them in their prime, though I did  
25. hear MADAME LIND-GOLDSCHMIDT sing the  
ERNST.

“Ravens” at a concert years afterwards, and it was my privilege to hear ERNST before he had lost his cunning, nor shall I ever hear his like again. He played once at Her Majesty’s Opera House, when the whole assembly seemed to dream through a performance of the “Hungarian Airs.” The lightest whisper of the violin controlled the house; the magician hardly stirred his wand at times, and no one could tell from the sound when he passed from the *up* to the *down* bow in those long cantabile notes which had such power to entrance me.

I heard ERNST later at Brighton. He played out of tune, and I was told that he was so shaken in nerve, that playing a BEETHOVEN quartet in private, and coming to a passage

of no great difficulty, which I have often scrambled through with impunity, the great master laid down his fiddle and declared himself unequal to the effort.

Great, deep-souled, weird magician of the Cremona! I can see thy pale, gaunt face even now! those dark, haggard-looking eyes, with the strange veiled fires, semi-mesmeric, the wasted hands, so expressive and sensitive, the thin, lank hair and emaciated form, yet with nothing demoniac about thee like PAGANINI, from whom thou wast absolutely distinct. No copy thou,—thyself all thyself—tender, sympathetic, gentle as a child, suffering, always suffering; full of an excessive sensibility; full of charm; irresistible and fascinating beyond words! Thy Cremona should have been buried with thee. It has fallen into other hands. I see it every season in the concert-room: MADAME NORMAN-NÉRUDA plays it. I know she is an admirable artist. I do not hear thy Cremona; its voice has gone out with thee, its soul has passed with thine.

In the night I hear it under the stars, when the moon is low, and I see the dark ridges of the clover hills, and rabbits and hares, black against the paler sky, pausing to feed or crouching to listen to the voices of the night.

Alone in the autumn woods, when through the shivering trees I see the angry yellow streaks of the sunset, and the dead leaves fall across a sky that threatens storm.

By the sea, when the cold mists rise, and hollow murmurs, like the low wail of lost spirits, rush along the beach.

In some still valley in the South, in midsummer, the slate-coloured moth on the rock flashes suddenly into crimson and takes wing ; the bright-eyed lizard darts timorously, and the singing of the grasshopper never ceases in the long grass ; the air is heavy and slumberous with insect life and the breath of flowers. I can see the blue sky—intense blue, mirrored in the lake—and a bird floats mirrored in the blue, and over the shining water comes the sound, breaking the singing silences of nature : such things are in our dreams !

It is thus only I can hear again the spirit voice of thy Cremona, dead master, but not at St. James's Hall ; no longer in the crowded haunts of men as once. Its body only is there : its soul was the very soul of the master who has passed to where the chiming is “after the chiming of the eternal spheres.”

I heard other great players : SIVORI, delicate, refined, with a perfect command of his instrument—a pupil of PAGANINI’s,

<sup>26.</sup> playing all his pieces, and probably no more like

SIVORI, him than a Roman candle is like a meteor ; CHATTERTON. CHATTERTON on the harp, a thankless instrument, without variety and never in tune, whose depths are quickly sounded—an *arpeggio*, a few *harmonics*, a few full glorious

chords, an ethereal whispering, and *da capo*! PIATTI on the violoncello—a truly disembodied violoncello—so pure and free from catgut and rosin came the sound; and pianists innumerable in later days. But if, looking back and up to the present hour, I am asked to name off-hand the greatest players—the very greatest I have heard—I say at once ERNST, LISZT, RUBINSTEIN.

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## II.

## BRIGHTON AND THE ISLE OF WIGHT.

1850-1856.

FROM such heights I am loth to return to my own insignificant doings, but they happen to supply me with the

framework for my present meditations: they are,

27.      MY SECOND in fact, the pegs on which I have chosen to hang

MASTER. my thoughts. I was at a complete standstill: I sorely needed instruction. I went to the seaside for my health. One day, in the morning, I entered the concert room of the town hall at Margate. It was empty, but on a platform at the farther end, half a dozen musicians were rehearsing. One sat up at a front desk and seemed to be leading on the violin. As they paused, I walked straight up to him. I was about twelve then.

"Please, sir," I began rather nervously, "do you teach the violin?"

He looked round rather surprised, but in another moment he smiled kindly, and said :

"Why, yes—at least," he added, "that depends. Do you mean you want to learn?"

"That's it," I said, "I have learned a little. Will you teach me?"

"Wait a bit. I must finish here first, and then I'll come down to you. Can you wait?" he added, cheerily.

I had been terribly nervous when I began to ask him, but now I felt my heart beating with joy.

"Oh yes," I said, "I can wait!" and I waited and heard them play, and watched every motion of one whom I already looked upon as my master.

And he became my master—my first *real* master. Good, patient MR. DEVONPORT! I took to him, and he took to me at once. He got me to unlearn all my slovenly ways, taught me how to hold my fiddle and how to finger and how to bow. It seems I did everything wrong. He used to write out KREUTZER's early exercises, over his breakfast, and bring them to me all blotted, in pen and ink, and actually got into disgrace, so he said, with his landlady, for inking the table-cloth! That seemed to me heroic; but who would not have mastered the crabbed bowing, the ups and downs and staccatos, and slur two and bow one, and slur three and bow one, and slur two and two, after that! And I did my best,

though not to his satisfaction ; but he never measured his time with me, and he had an indefinitely sweet way with him which won me greatly, and made me love my violin—a five-pound VUILHAUME copy of STRADIVARIUS, crude in tone—more than ever.

When I left the sea, I lost my master. I never saw him again. If he is alive now, and these lines should chance to meet his eye, I will join hands with him across the years. Why should he not be alive ? HULLAH and SAINTON and PIATTI and M<sup>E</sup> DOLBY and M<sup>E</sup> LIND-GOLDSCHMIDT, and I know not how many more of his contemporaries, and my elders, are alive. Only there was a sadness and delicacy about that pale diaphanous face, its hectic flush, its light hair, and slight fringe of moustache ; I can remember it so well ; and I must own, too, there was a little cough, which makes me fear that DEVONPORT was not destined to live long. Someone remarked it at the time, but I thought nothing of it then.

I made a great stride under DEVONPORT, and my next master, whom I disliked exceedingly, was a young Pole,

28. LAPINSKI, who could not speak a word of English.

MY THIRD MASTER. Our lessons were very dull. He taught me little, but he taught me something—the *art of making my fingers ache*—the great art, according to JOACHIM. My time with him was pure drudgery, unrelieved by a single glow of pleasure, or gleam of recreation ; he was a dogged and hard task-master, knew exactly what he meant,

and was utterly indifferent to the likes and dislikes of his pupil—the very opposite to DEVONPORT, whom in six weeks I got positively to love. In music, you learn more in a week from a sympathetic teacher, or at least from someone who is so to you, than from another, however excellent, in a month. You will make no progress if he can give you no impulse.

What a mystery lies in that word “teaching”! One will constrain you irresistibly, and another shall not be able to

persuade you. One will kindle you with an <sup>THE</sup> ~~MYSTERY OF~~ ambition that aspires to what the day before ~~TEACHING~~ seemed inaccessible heights, whilst another will labour in vain to stir your sluggish mood to cope with the smallest obstacle. The reciprocal relation is too often forgotten. It is assumed that any good master or mistress will suit any willing pupil. Not at all—any more than A can mesmerise B, who goes into a trance immediately on the appearance of C. All personal relations, and teaching relations are intensely personal, have to do with subtle conditions—unexplored—but inexorable and instantly perceived. The soul puts out, as it were, its invisible antennæ, knowing the soul that is kindred to itself. I do *not* want to be told whether you can teach me anything. I *know* you cannot. I will not learn from you what I *must* learn from another; what he will be bound to teach me. All you may have to say may be good and true, but it is a little impertinent and out of place. You spoil the truth. You mar the beauty.

I will not hear these things from you ; you spoil nature ; you wither art ; you are not for me, and I am not for you—“ Let us go hence, my songs—she will not hear.”

My next master was OURY. I fell in with him at Brighton when I was about sixteen. He had travelled with PAGANINI

30. and was a consummate violinist himself. He  
MY LAST  
MASTER,  
OURY. was a short, angry-looking, stoutly-built little man. Genial with those who were sympathetic to him, and sharp, savage, and sarcastic with others—he made many enemies, and was unscrupulous in his language. I found he had been unlucky, and I hardly wonder at it ; for a man more uncertain, unstable, and capricious in temper I never met—but he was an exquisite player ; his fingers were thick and plump, his hand was fat and short, not unlike that of poor JAELL, the late pianist. How he could stop his intervals in tune and execute passages of exceeding delicacy with such hands was a mystery to me ; but JAELL did things even more amazing with his—stretching the most impossible intervals, and bowling his fat hands up and down the key-board like a couple of galvanised balls.

I was at this time about sixteen and a member of the Brighton Symphony Society. We played the symphonies of the old masters to not very critical audiences in the Pavilion, and I have also played in the Brighton Town Hall. It was at these meetings I first fell in with OURY.

I noticed a little group in the ante-room on one of the

rehearsal nights ; they were chattering round a thickset crotchety-looking little man and trying to persuade him to do something. He held his fiddle, but would not easily yield to their entreaties. They were asking him to play. At last he raised his Cremona to his chin and began to improvise. What fancy and delicacy and execution ! what refinement ! His peculiar gift lay not only in a full round tone, but in the musical “embroideries”—the long flourishes, the torrents of multitudinous notes ranging all over the instrument. I can liken those astonishing violin passages to nothing but the elaborate embroidery of little notes which in CHOPIN’s music are spangled in tiny type all round the subject, which is in large type. When OURY was in a good humour he would gratify us in this way, and then stop abruptly, and nothing after that would induce him to play another note. He had the fine large style of the DE BERIOT school, combined with a dash of the brilliant and romantic PAGANINI, and the most exquisite taste of his own. In those days DE BERIOT’s music reigned supreme in the concert-room until the appearance of PAGANINI. It had not yet gone out of fashion, and I remember hearing OURY\*

\* “Do we not remember him,” writes a correspondent in August 1883, “more than a quarter of a century ago in Brighton, when his name was foremost on the programme of every public musical entertainment ; and his wife, Madame de Belleville Oury, the most artistic pianoforte performer of her day. But time has at length played out poor old Oury, his latter days were passed in peace at Norwich, and there it was, as his nephew, Mr. Crook, informed me, he shifted his mortal coil a fortnight since at the ripe age of 83.”

play DR BERIOT's showy first concerto with a full orchestra, at the Pavilion, in a way which reminded me of some conqueror traversing a battle-field ; the enthusiasm he aroused was quite remarkable, in that languid and ignorant crowd of loitering triflers. He certainly brought the house down. He was a great player, though past his prime, and he knew how to score point after point without ever sacrificing his musical honour by stooping to clap-trap.

From OURY I received, between the ages of fifteen and seventeen, my last definite violin instruction. After that I studied for myself and heard assiduously the best players, but I was never taught anything. OURY had been trained himself in the old and new schools of RODE, BAILLOT, and DE BERIOT, and only grafted on the sensational discoveries, methods, and tricks of PAGANINI, ERNST, and SIVORI. But he was artist enough to absorb without corruption and appropriate without mimicry. He always treated me with a semi-humorous, though kindly, indulgence. He was extremely impatient, and got quite bitter and angry with my ways ; stormed at my self-will ; said I had such a terrible second finger that he believed the devil was in it. I had a habit of playing whole tunes with my second finger on the fourth string. It seemed more muscular than the rest, and from his point of view quite upset the equilibrium of the hand. He had a habit of sighing deeply over the lessons.

“ You should have been in the profession. What’s the

use of teaching you? Bah! you will never do anything. I shall teach you no more."

Then he would listen, as I played some bravura passage in my own way, half-amused, half-surprised, half-satirical; my method was clearly wrong, but how had I got through the passage at all? Then taking the violin from me he would play it himself, without explanation, and then play on and say:

"Listen to me; that is your best lesson, you rascal! I believe you never practice at all. Nature has given you too much facility. Your playing will never be worth anything. You do not deserve the gifts God has given you."

At times poor OURY took quite a serious and desponding view of me. He would sit long over his hour, playing away and playing to me, telling me stories about PAGANINI's loosening the horsehair of his bow and passing the whole violin between the stick and the horsehair, thus allowing the loosened horsehair to scrape all four strings together, and producing the effect of a quartet. He described the great magician's playing of harmonic passages, and showed me how it was done, and told me how the fiddlers when PAGANINI played sat open-mouthed, unable to make out how he got at all his consecutive harmonics.

In his lighter moods he taught me the farm-yard on the violin; how to make the donkey bray, the hen chuckle, the cuckoo sing, the cow moo. He taught me PAGANINI's "Carnaval de Venise" variations; some of them—especially

the canary variation—so absurdly easy to any fingers at home on the violin, yet apparently so miraculous to the uninitiated. But it remained his bitterest reflection that amateur I was, and amateur I was destined to be ; otherwise, I believe, I should have been a pupil after his heart, for he spent hour after hour with me, and never seemed to reckon his time or his toil by money.

If I did not acquire the right method, it was not OURY's fault. He taught me how to hold the violin ; to spread my

31.      fingers instead of crumpling up those I was  
OURY'S      not using ; to bow without sawing round my  
METHOD.      shoulder.

"In position," he used often to say, "nothing is right unless all is right. Hold your wrist right, the bow must go right ; hold your fiddle well up, or you cannot get the tone."

Above all, he taught me how to *whip* instead of *scraping* the sound out. This springing, elastic bowing he contrasted with the grinding of badly-taught fiddlers, who checked the vibration. Some violinists of repute have been "grinders," but I could never bear to listen to them. OURY poisoned me early against the grinders, and all short of the men of perfect method. He instilled into me principles rather than rules. I caught from him what I was to do, and how I was to do it. He did not lecture at me like some masters ; he took the violin out of my hands without speaking, or with merely

an impatient expletive, of which, I regret to say, he was rather too free, and played the passage for me. His explanations I might have forgotten, this I could never forget, and I could tell at once whether what I did sounded like what he did.

OURY taught me the secret of *cantabile* playing on the violin—how to treat a simple melody with rare phrasing, until it was transfigured by the mood of the player. He taught me RODE's Air in G—that beautiful melody which has been, with its well-known variations, the *pièce de résistance* of so many generations of violinists and soprani. I was drilled in every note, the bowing was rigidly fixed for me, the whole piece was marked, bar by bar, with *slur*, *p* and *f*, *rall* and *crescendo*. I was not allowed to depart a hair's breath from rule. When I could do this easily and accurately, OURY surprised me one day by saying,

“Now you can play it as you like, you need not attend to a single mark !”

“How so ?” I said.

“Don't you see,” he said, “the marks don't signify : that is only one way of playing it. If you've got any music in you, you can play it in a dozen other ways. Now, I will make it equally good,” and he took the violin and played it through, reversing as nearly as possible all the *p*'s and *f*'s, “bowing” the slur and slurring the “bow,” and it sounded just as well. I never forgot that lesson. At other times OURY was most punctilious about what he called “correct”

bowing. He complained of my habit of beginning a *forte* “attaque” with an *up* bow—an unusual perversity, I admit—but I replied, in my conceit, I had observed RICHARD BLAGROVE do the same thing. OURY said, as sharply as wisely, “When you play like BLAGROVE, you may do it too; until then, oblige me, sir, by minding your up and down bow, or I cease to be your violin tutor.”

I had a good deal of orchestral practice at Brighton. The Symphony Society that met at the Pavilion, Brighton,

32.

THE  
BRIGHTON  
SYMPHONY  
SOCIETY.

was never very strong, but we blazed away at the principle overtures, “Der Freyschütz,” “Mansiello,” “Figaro,” “Dame Blanche,” “Cheval de Bronze”; we shuffled through HAYDN’s symphonies, and scrambled over MOZART’s “Jupiter” and BEETHOVEN’s 8th, very much to our own satisfaction. I remember the disgust of OURY when an enterprising amateur let off a pistol behind the platform to reinforce the sudden explosion on the drum in the Surprise movement. I suppose JULLIEN’s “British Army Quadrilles” had put it into his head.

OURY detested JULLIEN—why, I could never make out. I was fond of maintaining that JULLIEN had done much for

33.

OURY ON  
JULLIEN.

music in England, introduced classical works, was a famous conductor, and good composer of light music himself.

“ He knows nothing, I tell you; he is an ignorant, affected *charlatan*. He cannot write down his own compositions, he borrows his subjects, he steals his treatment, and he bribes a man to lick it into shape for him. MELLON, his leader, is a good musician ; but don’t talk to me of JULLIEN. You admire the way his band plays the overture to the ‘ Midsummer Night’s Dream,’ but those men learnt it under MENDELSSOHN’s *bâton* ! MENDELSSOHN took an infinity of trouble with those very men. They knew the music by heart before JULLIEN touched it, and they played away without even looking at him.”

I used about this time to hear some very good quartet-playing at CAPTAIN NEWBERRY’S, Brunswick Square. The

34. captain must have been nearly seventy about

SAINTON ON that time. He was excessively good-humoured, MENDELSSOHN AND but belonged to the old school of HAYDN and BEETHOVEN.

MOZART. BEETHOVEN’s earlier quartets were admitted, but the RAZAMOUSKY’S were declared to be outside the pale, and the captain annoyed me extremely by speaking in a very slighting way of MENDELSSOHN. “ Rides his subjects to death,” he used to say ; “ tears ’em all to pieces,” “ goes thin, very thin.” Those were the days when I felt quite sure that no one ever had or ever would write such inspired music as MENDELSSOHN. I think M. SAINTON’s calm verdict, not long afterwards, irritated me still more. I said to him with ill-advised confidence : “ I had sooner

hear MENDELSSOHN's canzonet or the quintet than any of BEETHOVEN's chamber music."

"Vous avez cependant tort," said the great artist, "there is no comparison to be made. You cannot speak of the two together. MENDELSSOHN, c'était un jeune homme d'un énorme talent ; mais BEETHOVEN—oh ! c'est autre chose !"

The captain had some fine violins ; one I specially coveted ; he held it to be a genuine STRADIVARIUS ; it was labelled  
1712 ; quite in the finest period, and of the  
<sup>35.</sup> grand pattern—the back a magnificently ribbed  
MY VIOLIN. slice of maple in one piece ; the front hardly so fine ; the head strong, though not so fine as I have seen—more like a BERGONZI—but the fiddle itself could never be mistaken for a BERGONZI. It had a tone like a trumpet on the fourth string ; the third was full, but the second puzzled me for years—it being weak by comparison—but the violin was petulant, and after having it in my possession for thirty years, I know what to do with it if I could ever again take the time and trouble to bring it into perfect order and keep it so, as it was once my pride to do.

On CAPTAIN NEWBERRY's death that fiddle was sent me by his widow, who did not survive him long. She said she believed it was his wish.

This violin was my faithful companion for years. I now look at it under a glass case occasionally, where it lies

unstrung from one end of the year to the other. It belonged to the captain's uncle; he had set his heart on it, and having a very fine pair of carriage horses, for which he had given £180, he one day made them over to his uncle and obtained the Strad in exchange. This was the last price paid for my violin, some fifty years ago. It came into the hands of NEWBERRY's relative early in the present century—how, I know not. Many years ago I took this fiddle down to Bath and played it a good deal there in a band conducted by the well-known MR. SALMON. I found he recognised it immediately. I there made acquaintance with the score of MENDELSSOHN's "Athalie" playing it in the orchestra. I studied the Scotch and Italian symphonies in the same way.

No amateur should omit an opportunity of orchestral or chorus work. In this way you get a more living acquaintance with the internal structure of the great

36. master-pieces than in any other. I first made

CHARM OF  
ORCHESTRAL  
PLAYING. acquaintance with the "Elijah" and "St. Paul" in this way. What writing for the violin there is in the chorus parts! what telling passages are those in "Be not afraid," where the first violins lift the phrases, rise after rise, until the shrill climax is reached and the aspiring passage is closed with a long drawn-out *ff*.

When the violins pealed louder and louder, mounting upwards, it was always a delight to me to hear my own

powerful first string thrilling through all the others. The conductor used to know this passage and the way in which it told on my Strad, and invariably gave me a knowing nod as he heard my violin at the first fiddle-desk through all the others. I may add that, as a rule, when any particular violin in a band is heard above the rest, it usually belongs to a bungler ; but there are passages where the leading violins have *carte blanche* to play up, and then, if you can, you may be allowed to sing through the rest ; and, if this be anywhere allowable, it is of course so at the first violin desk.

Most boys find it difficult to keep up their music at school ; with me it was the reverse ; my ill health was

37.      the making of my music. I had been an invalid FRESHWATER,  
ISLE OF  
WIGHT.

member SIR BENJAMIN BRODIE, the great doctor, a thin, wizen, little old man, coming and staring at me, about the year 1848, at No. 2, Spanish Place, my grandfather's house in London. I was then suffering from hip disease. They asked him whether I should be taken to Brighton. He mumbled something to himself and turned away to speak with my father aside. I merely noticed an expression of great pain and anxiety on my father's face as he listened. Afterwards I knew the great doctor had said it did not matter where I went, for in any case I could not live. He thought it was a question of weeks. He little knew how

much it would take to kill me. People are born long-lived. It runs in families. It has little to do with health and disease. If you are long-lived you will weather disease, and if you are short-lived you will drop suddenly in full health, or be blown out like a candle, with a whiff of fever or bronchitis. My grandfather died Rector of Aldwinkle, when past eighty; my father having been given over at thirty-two by his doctors, as I was condemned by SIR BENJAMIN BRODIE at eleven, became Rector of Slaugham, Sussex, at seventy-two, and was made a Canon and Prebendary of Chichester Cathedral when hard upon eighty. He picked up his general health about sixty. I was more fortunate, I picked up mine before thirty. SIR BENJAMIN pocketed his fee and departed. In great perplexity what to do, we cast lots; I think it was at my suggestion. The lot came out in favour of Brighton. To Brighton I was taken, apparently in a dying state, but at my grandmother's house in Brunswick Square I began rapidly to amend.

My violin was my solace, when I got strong enough to hold it again. The time that should have been spent upon mathematics, Latin, and Greek, was spent in my case upon French, German, and music—I may add novels, for between the ages of twelve and sixteen I read all BULWER, WALTER SCOTT, G. P. R. JAMES, FENIMORE COOPER, and, in certain visits to Bath and Bognor, I took care to exhaust the ancient stores of fiction which I found secreted in the antiquated lending libraries of those privileged resorts.

When I was sixteen it became evident that I was not going to die; my health was still feeble, and my general

38. education defective. I was sent to an excellent

SCHOOL AT FRESHWATER. tutor at the Isle of Wight, the REV. JOHN BICKNELL, now Incumbent of St. Saviour's, Highbury. That good man never overcame my dislike to mathematics, but he got me on in Latin, and he was kind enough to tolerate my violin.

I could no longer play cricket, or climb trees, the chief delights of my earlier days—nor could I take long walks with the boys. I was left entirely alone in play hours—*i.e.* almost every afternoon. I think I was perfectly happy by myself. Freshwater, Isle of Wight, in 1853, was very different from Freshwater in 1883. There were no forts built then, no tourists, hardly a lodging house, and only a few cottages. There was the Rector, a REV. MR. ISAACSON, learned, dogmatic, and of the old high and dry school in the pulpit; there were two or three families who owned between them most of that part of the island—the Hammonds, the Croziers, and the Cottons. There was a rotten steamer called the “Solent” which plied between the dirty little town of Yarmouth and the mainland—and when it crossed we got letters; and when it did not cross we went without. And there was such utter solitude for me, in the silent lanes, the summer woodlands, and by the lovely sea-shore, that—well—I had plenty of time to think. I sat on stiles and thought; I tasted almost every kind of

berry and herb that grew in the hedges. I watched the butterflies and the teeming insect life, and I would lie down in the woody recesses and leafy coverts like one dead, until the birds, the rabbits, and even the weasels and stoats came close enough for me to see their exquisitely clean soft fur, bright eyes, or radiant plumage. I have surprised a wild hawk on her nest in the gorse, and she has never moved.

About this time I wrote quantities of the most dismal poetry, which appeared at intervals in the columns of the Brighton papers. It was naturally a mixture of BRYANT and LONGFELLOW, later on it became a jumble of TENNYSON and BROWNING—but such matters belong more to literature than to music.

OURY had already begun to direct my violin studies. I had ample time at school in the Isle of Wight for practising, and I practised steadily, nearly every day. I had a faculty for practising. I knew what to do, and I did it. I always remembered what JOACHIM had said about tiring out the hand ; and with some abominable torture passages, invented for me by that morose Pole, LAPINSKI, I took a vicious pleasure in making my fingers ache, and an intense delight in discovering the magical effects of the torture upon my execution.

I put my chief trust in KREUTZER's exercises—admirable in invention and most attractive as musical studies—the

more difficult ones in chords being little violin solos in themselves. I perfected myself in certain solos 39. at this time. I had no one to play my accompaniments, and no one cared to hear me play at school, except some of the boys who liked to hear me imitate the donkey and give the farm-yard entertainment—including the groans of a chronic invalid and a great fight of cats on the roof—which never failed to be greeted with rapturous applause.

My great solos were RODE's air in G, DE BERIOT's "First Concerto," and several of his "Airs variés"; ERNST's "Carnaval de Venise," his Elégie, and some occasional "Morceaux" which I had heard him play shockingly out of tune at Brighton.

Then there was the "Cuckoo Solo"—one of the pieces played by the little girl of six who so fascinated me at Norwood. Besides these, I had certain mixtures of my own—a mixture of Italian airs with some prodigious cadenzas and a *bravura* passage at the end in the worst possible taste, which always brought down the house. Then I invented a final variation to the "Carnaval de Venise," more preposterous than any of the PAGANINI or ERNST series. This variation was so difficult that I could never really play it; but my attempts to scramble through it being always vociferously applauded, I habitually inflicted it upon undiscriminating audiences—alas! the commonest kind of musical audiences in this country—though I am thankful to say this is far

less true now, and in London, than it was in the days of my boyhood.

I said no one cared to hear me play at Freshwater. Yes, some people did. One autumn whilst I was at Freshwater,

40. an old house, Farringford, with a rambling

AT FARRING- garden at the back of the downs, was let to  
FORD.

Baron A.—an eminent light of the Bench—and his charming family. I forget how they discovered my existence, but I dare say Lady A. and the young ladies found the place rather dull, and they were not the people to neglect their opportunities.

I received an invitation to dinner; my violin was also asked. I did not reply like SIVORI when similarly invited to bring his violin with him: “*Merci! mon violon ne dîne pas!*” I saw to my strings and screws, put together my solos, and went.

Lady A., with her beautiful grey hair, her sweet and dignified smile, and a soul full of musical sensibility, received me with the most flattering cordiality. The eldest young lady, now the Marchioness of S—, I remember seeing once or twice only at Farringford. Table-turning was all the fashion then. The Farringford circle was, like most others, divided on the question, but the old Baron was a sceptic.

We all sat round a heavy dining-table one day, and the thing certainly began to go round, and was only arrested in

its course through a large bow window by the hurried breaking up of the circle. I didn't turn any more tables at Farringford, but Lady A. used to beg me to come as often as I could and play, and I think I went there on an average twice a week and enjoyed myself immensely. The Farringford music was not strong, as to pianoforte playing at least; but the youngest daughter, Miss M., little more than a child, had a sweet voice, and seemed to me altogether an angelic being, and between them they managed to get through some of my easier accompaniments. OURY had given me an air of MAYERSEDER's, to which he had added a pathetic little closing cadence of his own. He had taught me to play it with due expression, and this air Lady A. could never hear often enough. The little cadence in sliding sixths at the end, she said, always made her feel inclined to scream. One night Miss M. induced her mother to sing "Auld Robin Gray." "You know, mamma," she said, "everyone used to cry when you sang 'Auld Robin Gray.'" "Ah! my dear," said the old lady—"that was long ago. I can't sing now, I'm an old woman"; but she did sing, and with a pathetic simple grace and feeling which I can remember vividly even now; and as I listened I easily perceived where Miss M. had got her sweet soprano voice from.

Soon after the A.'s left Farringford it was taken by the Poet Laureate. At that time I was rapidly outgrowing

LONGFELLOW, and my enthusiasm for MR. TENNYSON amounted to a mania: he was to me in poetry what  
41. MENDELSSOHN was in music. I can now place  
TENNYSON. him. I can now see how great he is. I can now understand his relation to other poets. Then I could not. He confused and dazzled me. He took possession of my imagination. He taught me to see and to feel for the first time the heights and depths of life; to discern dimly what I could then have had little knowledge of—"The world with all its lights and shadows, all the wealth and all the woe." In fact, TENNYSON was then doing for the rising generation of that age what BYRON and SHELLEY, WORDSWORTH and COLERIDGE, had done for theirs, only he united in himself more representative qualities than any one of the poets who preceded him, and in this respect he seems to me still a greater poet, and certainly as subtle a thinker as any one of them, WORDSWORTH and COLERIDGE not excepted.

All this is an after-thought. Then I did not analyse or compare. The Brighton papers received elaborate prose effusions from my pen upon the subject, at the time, of a frothy and rhetorical character. Sometimes I look at them in my old scrap-books, and marvel at the bombast, inflation, and prodigious inanity of the matter and the style. No doubt I was not quite right in my head about TENNYSON, and this accounts for my wending my steps towards Farringford one autumn afternoon, soon after he had come there.

The poet never went to church, so the poet could never be seen. The man who, in the “*In Memoriam*,” had recently re-formulated the religion of the nineteenth century, might, one would have thought, be excused the dismal routine that went on at the parish church, and the patristic theology doled out by the worthy rector. But no! MR. TENNYSON’s soul was freely despaired of in the neighbourhood, and many of the people about Freshwater would have been “very faithful” with him if they could only have got at him—but they could not get at him. Under these circumstances I got at him.

I suppose the continued play of one idea upon my brain was too much for me. To live so close to the man who

42.      filled the whole of my poetic and imaginative

MY VISIT TO  
TENNYSON  
IN 1854. horizon without ever seeing him, was more than I could bear. I walked over the neglected grass-grown gravel between the tall trees yellowing in the autumn, and up to the glass-pannelled doors, as bold as fate.

“MR. TENNYSON,” said the maid, “saw no one.” I was aware of that. Was MRS. TENNYSON at home? Perhaps she would see me? The servant looked dubious. I was a shabby-looking student, sure enough, but there was something about me which could not be said nay! I evidently meant to get in, and in I got.

In another moment I found myself in the drawing-room lately tenanted by the Baron and Lady A.

There was the arm-chair where lady A. had sat reclining, with her head resting on a little cushion, as she sang “Auld Robin Gray.”

There was the piano beside which Miss M. stood and sang very shyly and under protest in her simple white muslin dress and a rose in her hair; there—but the door opened, and a quiet, gentle lady appeared, and bowed silently to me. I had to begin then.

I had no excuse to make, and so I offered no apology. I had called desiring to see MR. TENNYSON, that was all.

The lady looked surprised, and sat down by a little work-table with a little work-basket on it. She asked me very kindly to sit down too. So I sat down. What next? Now I got clumsy with a vengeance. All my wits forsook me. I looked out at the tangled garden—everything was allowed to grow wild. I had to say something. I looked at the kind lady, who had already taken up her work and begun plying her needle. I said that my admiration for MR. TENNYSON’s poems was so great that, as I was living in the neighbourhood, I had called with an earnest desire to see him. I then began to repeat that I considered his poems so exquisite that—a smile was on the kind lady’s face as she listened for the thousand and first time to such large and general praises of the Laureate’s genius. But the smile somehow paralysed me. She evidently considered me a harmless lunatic, not an impertinent intruder.

This was fortunate, for had I been summarily shown the

door I should not have been surprised. I should not have gone, for I was desperate and prepared to show fight, and be kicked out, if needful, by the Laureate alone; but the Fates were propitious.

Said MRS. TENNYSON, "My husband is always very busy, and I do not at all think it likely he can see you."

"Do you think he would if you ask him?" I stammered out.

Said MRS. TENNYSON, a little taken aback, "I don't know."

"Then," said I, pursuing my advantage with, if any calm at all, the calmness of a calm despair, "would you object to asking him to see me, if only for an instant?"

What passed in that indulgent lady's mind I shall never know; the uppermost thought was probably not flattering to me, and her chief desire was, no doubt, to get rid of me. "He won't go till he has seen my husband—he ought never to have got in; but as he is here, I'll manage it and have done with him"; or she might have reflected thus: "The poor fellow is not right in his head; it would be a charity to meet him half-way, and not much trouble."

At any rate at this juncture MRS. TENNYSON rose and left the room. She was gone about four minutes by the clock. It seemed to me four hours. What I went through in those four minutes no words can utter. "Will he come? I almost hope he won't. If he won't come, I shall have done all I could to see him, without experiencing a shock to

which my nervous system is quite unequal." At that moment, indeed, I was trembling with excitement from top to toe. I thought I would try and recollect some of his own sublime verse, it might steady me a little. I knew volumes of it by heart—couldn't recollect a line anywhere, except—

Wrinkled ostler grim and thin,  
Here is custom come your way,  
Take my brute and lead him in,  
Stuff his ribs with mouldy hay.

I believe I was muttering this mechanically when I heard a man's voice close outside the door.

"Who is it? Is it an impostor?"

Ah, verily, the word smote me to the heart. What right had I to be there? Conscience said, "Thou art the man!" I would have willingly disappeared into my boots, like the genius in the fairy tale. "O, that this too, too solid flesh would melt"; but I remained palpable and motionless—glued to the spot.

In another moment the door opened. The man whose voice I had heard—in other words, MR. TENNYSON—entered.

He was not in Court-dress; he had not got a laurel wreath on his head, nor a lily in his hand—not even a harp.

It was in the days when he shaved. I have two portraits of him without a beard. I believe they are very rare now.

I thought it would be inappropriate to prostrate myself

so I remained standing and stupefied. He advanced towards me and shook hands without cordiality. Why should he be cordial? I began desperately to say that I had the greatest admiration for his poetry; that I could not bear to leave the island without seeing him. He soon stopped me, and taking a card of CAPTAIN CROZIER's which lay on the table, asked me if I knew him. I said I did, and described his house and grounds in the neighbourhood of Freshwater.

I have no recollection of anything else, but I believe some allusion was made to Baron A——, when the poet observed abruptly, "Now I must go; good-bye!" and he went. And that was all I saw of MR. TENNYSON for nearly thirty years. The next time I set eyes on him was one Sunday morning, about twenty-eight years later. He came up the side aisle of my church, St. James, Westmoreland Street, Marylebone, and, with his son HALLAM, sat near the pulpit, almost in the very spot that had been pointed out to me when I was appointed incumbent as the pew occupied by HALLAM the historian and his son ARTHUR—the ARTHUR of the "In Memoriam."

But I have not quite done with the interview at Freshwater. As the poet retired, MRS. TENNYSON re-entered and sat down again at her work-table. To her surprise, no doubt, I also sat down. The fact is, I  
43      <sup>MRS.</sup> <sub>TENNYSON.</sub> had crossed the Rubicon, and was now in a state of considerable elation and perfectly reckless. I thanked

her effusively for the privilege I had had—I believe I made several tender and irrelevant inquiries after the poet's health, and wound up with earnestly requesting her to give me a bit of his handwriting.

This was perhaps going a little too far—but I had now nothing to lose—no character for sanity, or prudence, or propriety; so I went in steadily for some of the poet's handwriting.

The forbearing lady pointed out that she treasured it so much herself that she never gave it away. This would not do. I said I should treasure it to my dying day, any little scrap—by which I suppose I meant that I did not require the whole manuscript of “*Maud*,” which the poet was then writing, and which is full of Freshwater scenery. I might be induced to leave the house with something short of that.

With infinite charity and without a sign of irritation she at last drew from her work-basket an envelope in MR. TENNYSON's handwriting, directed to herself, and gave it to me.

It was not his signature, but it contained his name.

Then, and then only, I rose. I had *veni*, I had *vidi*, I had *vici*. I returned to my school, and at tea-time related to my tutor with some little pride and self-conceit the nature of my exploit that afternoon. He administered to me a well-merited rebuke, which, as it came after my indiscretion, and in no way interfered with my long-coveted joy, I took patiently enough and with all meekness.

There is a strange link between these two old memories of Farringford, Isle of Wight. I may call it the link of a

44. common oblivion. Years afterwards I tried to

THE LINK OF recall to Lady A., who frequented my church in OBLIVION.

her later days, the, to me, delicious evenings I had spent with her and her daughters at Farringford. She had not the slightest recollection of ever having received me there, or sung to me there, or heard me play. She reintroduced me to her eldest daughter, the Marchioness of S., then Viscountess C., one night at her house in Portland Place, who was probably not aware of ever having seen me before, although I remembered her well at Farringford. Years afterwards I tried to recall to MR. and MRS. TENNYSON that preposterous visit of mine, which I have detailed, but neither of them could recall it in the slightest degree.

So strange is it that events which upon some of the actors leave such an indelible impression pass entirely away from the memories of the others—and what a sermon might be preached on that text! The very same scene in which you and I are the only ones concerned—is nothing to you, everything to me.

O ye tidal years that roll over us all—be kind ! Wash out the memory of our pain and the dark blots of sin and grief, but leave, oh leave us bright, the burnished gold of joy, and the rainbow colours of our youth !



I have been a martyr to bad accompanyists. All young ladies think they can accompany themselves—so why not you or any other man? The truth is that very few ladies can accompany at all. If they sing

45.  
ACCOMPANY-  
ISTS.

they will probably try, in the absence of any musical friend, to make shift with a few chords in order that the assembly may not be deprived of a song. But also if they sing they will probably have forgotten the little they once knew about pianoforte playing. To accompany yourself properly you must do it with ease and accuracy: nothing is so charming and nothing is so rare.

Singing ladies, especially amateurs, are pitifully unscrupulous, and moderately unconscious of the wild effect produced by that fitful and inaccurate dabbling with the keyboard which they palm off upon their listeners as an accompaniment. Now and then a Scotch ballad may survive such treatment—a Scotch ballad seems always grateful for any accompaniment at all—but to attempt GOUNOD or SCHUBERT in this style is conduct indicative of a weak intellect and a feeble conscience.

To accompany well you must not only be a good musician but you must be mesmeric, sympathetic, intuitive. You must know what I want before I tell you, you must feel which way my spirit sets, for the motions of the soul are swift as an angel's flight. I cannot pause in those quick and subtle transitions of emotion, fancy, passion, to tell you a secret; if it is not yours already, you are unworthy of

it. What! when I had played three bars thus, you could not guess that I should hurry the fourth and droop with a melodious sigh upon the fifth! You dared to strike in at the end of a note which my intention would have stretched out into at least another semibreve! You are untrue to the rhythm of my soul. Get up from the piano, my conceited, self-satisfied young lady. Your finishing lessons in music can do nothing for you. Your case is hopeless. You have not enough music in you to know that you are a failure. \*

But you may be even a good musician and yet not be able to accompany. If you cannot, be passive for a while. You are of no use to me. You want to take the initiative—you must always be creating, you think you know best, you impose your “reading” upon me. What! you will do this when I am the soloist or the singer! You are professional—’tis the vice of professionals—and I am but an amateur. No matter; if I know not best, that is my affair; for better for worse you have to follow me, or you will mar me. The art of true accompanying lies in a willing self-immolation. An excess of sensibility, but a passive excess. Yet must your collaboration be strong. You must not desert me or fail me in the moment of my need or expectancy. You must cover me with thunder, you must buoy me up as a barque is buoyed up on the bosom of a great flood. You must be still anon and wait, dream with my spirit, as the winds that droop fitfully when

the sea grows calm and the white sails flap idly, sighing for the breeze. I sleep, but my heart waketh! Every mood of mine must be thine as soon as it is mine, and when all is finished my soul shall bless thee, and thou, too, shalt feel a deep content.

In my vacations at Brighton I suffered musically many things at the hands of many accompanists, chiefly young

46. ladies. I was fortunate in playing habitually

MUSIC AT BRIGHTON IN 1856. with my elder sister, and later on with my

younger sister, both of whom were thoroughly familiar with my style; but I sometimes fell among the Philistine women at evening parties and musical circles. In those days musical taste at Brighton was not high. No one thought of listening to mere pianoforte playing. There were a few good singers to whom people did attend. I remember MRS. WELDON, then a mere girl, Miss TREHERNE, and possessed of considerable personal attractions. She was a charming drawing-room singer, and was always listened to with respect in those days.

A delicious little song, "Birds in the Branches," of German origin, made a great impression on me when sung by a MISS CHAPMAN—a very handsome, pale, refined-looking girl—daughter of MR. CHAPMAN of the Overend and Gurney Bank. They lived in Brunswick Square, and I met this young lady on an average twice a week at musical parties, and late and early she sang very deliciously and dreamily,

“ Birds in the Branches.” The poor girl married a fashionable baronet in the neighbourhood, and died shortly afterwards.

MISS HARRIETT YOUNG, the author of several popular songs, was a brilliant amateur pianist. Her singing—she had a light high soprano—was even more esteemed ; people were not musical enough to understand the merit of her playing. I remember hearing her in the MENDELSSOHN D minor trio at PROFESSOR D’ALQUEN’s one night, and being much overcome by my feelings at the wild and magnificent close, I turned to a musician who was standing close to me and exclaimed, “ ‘Tis like going up to heaven by a whirlwind ! ” He merely stared.

D’ALQUEN used to play at CAPTAIN NEWBERRY’s. He got one of his violins when the Captain died. He did a great deal for music in Brighton. He was an admirable musician, an excellent teacher, and a German artist of the solid MOSCHELES type. I was one night at his house when a telegram arrived to say that Sebastopol had at last fallen, and D’ALQUEN sat down to the piano and executed a rather disjointed but murderous improvisation inspired by the siege and ultimate surrender of that redoubtable fortress ; the great guns in the bass were continuous and the firing was very heavy. Before midnight another telegram arrived to say that it was all a mistake, and Sebastopol had not fallen. Of course we took no notice, and indeed were rather anxious to conceal the awkward and

malaprop intelligence from the worthy Professor. We all felt it was high time Sebastopol did fall, and some time afterwards it fell, and D'ALQUEN's piano, which had suffered considerably from the cannonade by anticipation, had at last something to show for it.

In those days the musical culture of Brighton was chiefly managed by HERR KÜHE, still an ornament of the Brighton season, MONS. DE PARIS, and SIGNOR LI CALSI, sometime conductor of the Italian Opera, and, let me add, an admirable musician, pianist, and, above all, accompanyst. He accompanied me occasionally on the piano, and also in another capacity, for we travelled together as far as Genoa. I was on my way to Naples. LI CALSI had started with rifle and sword to join GARIBALDI, like many other Italian patriots. He got to Sicily, and got no farther. He was a Sicilian by birth. He revisited his friends, and parted with his rifle.

After GARIBALDI's capture of Naples there was really little more to do. I went on and assisted at the siege of Capua,

47.  
PLAYING AT PARTIES.

but it was mere dabbling in war, and LI CALSI probably felt that the work was over, and well over, without him, and he might as well rest and be thankful at Palermo, most delightful of southern cities. But I am not writing my life abroad, or the story of my Garibaldian campaign at Naples, and I make haste to return to Brighton.

The musical parties at Brighton were a source of very mixed satisfaction to me. I believe I always had the instinct of a *virtuoso*, and I certainly had the irritability and impatience of one. It was not *de rigueur* at Brighton to listen to anyone, but I never could bear playing to people who did not listen. In mixed companies I resorted to every conceivable trick and device to ensnare attention ; and I am quite aware—as STERNDALE BENNETT, who accompanied the first solo I ever played in a public concert room, told me some years afterwards—that I injured my style by a partiality for crude and sensational effect, which my better judgment even then revolted from.

I had the deepest contempt for mixed audiences. On more than one occasion, when I had been unable with my utmost efforts to silence the roar of conversation, I have simply laid down my violin in the middle of a bar, and received the thanks of my hostess—who thought it was all right and quite “too-too”—with a smile and a bow far more satirical than polite. But I am bound to say that the violin, being in those days somewhat of a novelty in private society, and I having won a sort of reputation, I usually got the ear of the room, and I may perhaps, without undue vanity say, usually kept it.

Being naturally short of stature, I have suffered much from having often to play behind a crowd, a few only of whom

could either hear or see me. The soloist or singer ought

48. always to be raised, if possible. He has to

THE SOLOIST magnetise his audience as well as play to  
MUST BE  
SEEN. them. He cannot do this unless he can see and

be seen. When I got more knowing, I always chose a vantage-ground and cleared a space in front of me. The next best thing to being *raised* for a speaker or a player is to be *isolated*. Public performers often neglect this. I have seen a singer in a dark dress against a dark background, and half-way down the room she has been undistinguishable from the chorus behind her. I have seen a lecturer in a black coat, with a black board for his background, and a little way off it has been “*Vox et præterea nihil.*”

As from the age of seven I have always played the violin more or less publicly, I entered upon my amateur career

49. at Brighton without the smallest nervousness.

“*MOMENTS PERDUS.*” My facility was very great, but my execution, although showy (and, I blush to add, tricky), was never as finished as I could have desired. My tone, however, was considered by OURY remarkable, and except when drilling me with a purpose he would never interfere with my reading of a solo. It was the only point in which he gave in to me.

“I never taught you that,” he would say sharply.

“Shall I alter it?” I would ask.

"No, no, let it alone ; follow your own inspiration ; you must do as you will, the effect is good."

Indeed, no one ever taught me the art of drawing tears from the eyes of my listeners. Moments came to me when I was playing—I seemed far away from the world. I was not scheming for effect—there was no trick about it. I could give no reason for the *rall*, the *p*, the *pp*, the *f*. Something in my soul ordered it so, and my fingers followed, communicating every inner vibration through their tips to the vibrating string until the mighty heart of the Cremona pealed out like a clarion, or whispered tremblingly in response. But those moments did not come to me in mixed, buzzing audiences ; then I merely waged impatient war with a mob.

They came in still rooms where a few were met, and the lights were low, and the windows open toward the sea.

They came in brilliantly lighted halls, what time I had full command from some platform of an attentive crowd gathered to listen, not to chatter.

They came when some one or other sat and played with me, whose spirit-pulses rose and fell with mine—in a world of sound where the morning stars seemed always singing together.

I was such a thorn in the side of my accompanists that at last they got to have a wholesome dread of me. In this way I often got off playing at houses where people asked

me to bring my violin *impromptu*, because I happened to be the fashion.

I remember one such house—the young lady who was to accompany me had just come home from school with all the accomplishments. Her music was so <sup>50.</sup> superfine that she had even learned to play A SACRIFICE. MENDELSSOHN's "Songs without Words," No. I., Book I., vilely, as I am afraid I told her in language more true than polite. I was just seventeen. She was very good-looking, with a considerable opinion of my musical faculties, and apparently not unwilling to be taught, so I went through No. I., Book I. I was sanguine enough to hope that I might impart to her a right feeling for it. All in vain. She played it like a bit of wood—mechanically correct and mechanically stupid. I gave it up, and took out my violin—it was the morning, and we had met to rehearse quietly for the evening RODE's air in G. Of course, the accompaniment to this was simple, very simple, but all depended upon the sympathetic following—a hair's-breadth out, and the whole would be marred. I felt blank enough at the prospect after No. I., Book I. She glanced at the music.

"It's not very difficult, is it?"

"Oh dear no," I replied, "the notes *you* have to play are easy enough; you must follow me. It's not in strict time, you know. I play it varying the time accord-

ing to expression, and you must watch and wait for me."

So we began. I stopped her at the second bar. We began again. I stopped her at the fourth bar. I was very patient but very determined. She was very good and patient too, but alas! hopelessly incompetent. I stopped her at the sixth bar—I was losing my temper a little. I did not notice her growing distress. I went on saying rather hardly, "You came in too soon," "You don't wait for me," "Begin again," and so on. Not until I turned round to rebuke the unfortunate girl for a new blunder, and saw a great tear roll on to the ivory keys, accompanied by a little suppressed sob, was I fully alive to the situation. My angry complaint died upon my lips. I muttered some clumsy apology, but she rose from the piano scarlet with humiliation and rushed out of the room. I felt like a brute, but I was profoundly thankful to think that I had escaped the ordeal of having to go through RODE's air in G with a young lady who had just given me such a taste of her quality.

I am glad to say that, although her mother thought it silly, this was the first and last time she ever played in my presence, or proposed to accompany me. This is only a specimen of the trials I had to go through when I was a violin-playing youth about Brighton and elsewhere.

Some of the best rooms for music which I have played in at Brighton are the drawing-rooms in Adelaide Crescent,

and some among the worst are to be found in Lansdowne Place. I suppose I had my unknown admirers,  
51. as one day I received an invitation to a ball  
**BRIGHTON TASTE.** given by the officers then quartered at Brighton, whom I used to meet in society, but only knew by sight. This, on account of my youth, I was very properly advised to decline, as well as many other invitations to *play* at the houses of strangers who got introductions to me through those occasionally doubtful blessings called "mutual friends."

From what I have said it will appear that musical taste in Brighton about 1856 was not high. I can hardly recollect a salient point to relieve the dull dead level of amateur dabbling. Here and there one met with a pianist of promise, a strong cornet or private flute, with considerable taste and execution, and invariably out of tune with the piano, and the usual number of girls singing the ditties of "Claribel" or "Virginia Gabriel," &c., who have at last been crowded out, I am thankful to say, by ARTHUR SULLIVAN, F. CLAY, and TOSTI.

I was always very open to new musical impressions, and very ready to hail the least symptoms of musical ability.

52. Amateurs suppose that persons who have studied  
**MUSICAL QUALITY.** music, especially professionals, are hard to please. This is a mistake. A real musician gives you the utmost credit for what you do, and even for what you try to do. He can put up with almost anything but stupid

insensibility and conceit. He discerns quickly the least spark of talent, and makes little account of deficiencies which time and industry will correct. When I hear anyone, I cannot help instinctively gauging their first-rate musical organisation, second-rate ditto, third-rate ditto, fourth organic incompetence. Of course there is every degree, and anything below second-rate quality is in my opinion not worth cultivating. The curse of English professional music is the plethora of second-rate quality. The glory of English amateur music is that sprinkling of first-rate quality which towers above the dead level of amateur incompetence. The dullest thing I know is to listen to cultivated second-class quality, amateur or professional. It is not bad enough to condemn, nor good enough to praise, nor interesting enough to listen to. 'Tis the pretentious curse of drawing-rooms, the bane of concert rooms, and the despair of helpless creatures who struggle about in the whirlpool of London music and subside into nursery governesses, milliners, or marriage.

There are some people whose musical organisation is so fine, and whose instinctive method is so true, that without

53.  
NATURAL  
GIFTS.

that stern discipline usually essential to the production of the voice, they have managed to teach themselves how to sing modestly but faultlessly, as far as they go, although not knowing even their notes. Those people will sing you a national ballad with true

pathos, and even a certain technical finish, which many a skilled professional might envy.

I remember delighting in **LORD HEADLEY**'s singing, which was of this kind. He lived close to us, in Brunswick Square, and I often heard him after dinner sing his Irish ballads—not invariably **MOORE**, but some wilder still, and some quite unfamiliar to me. He used to throw back his rather large head, and display a very broad white waist-coat; and standing with his two thumbs thrust into the arm-holes of his waistcoat, and his fingers spread out and twitching nervously with emotion, he would pour out his ditty with the truest instinct and often finest pathos. In this, without knowing a note of music, he evidently took exceeding delight himself, and so did we. He who loves the sound of his own voice is not always so fortunate. **LORD HEADLEY**'s voice was small, flexible, and exquisitely sympathetic, and made me always think of **Tom Moore**'s graceful musical declamation of the Irish melodies, which, of course, I had only read about.

I do not think, on the whole, the sea-coast street music, especially at Brighton, has improved during the last thirty

54. years—the German bands, niggers, and itinerant

**SEASIDE MINSTRELS.** troubadours. I can recollect fine part-singing out of doors in the old days, and I know of no small band—violin, tenor, flute, and harp—at all comparable to that of **SIGNOR BENEVENTANO**, who used to play on the

beach at Brighton, with a power of expression that drew crowds, and half-crowns too. I was so much fascinated by this Italian, that I took him home with me and bade him try my violin. It was simply horrible. He scraped, and rasped, and powdered the rosin all over the finger-board, till I was glad to get the instrument out of his hands. The fact is, the coarse playing, so effective on the Parade, was intolerable indoors. He was essentially a street player —a genius,—but his music was, like coarse and effective scene-painting, better a little way off. Once after that I gave him a lunch at “ Mutton’s ”; but I found him dull, servile, uneducated, and stupid to a degree, even about music. I discovered that he could not write down his own arrangements, which were so effective ; the modest harper, content to efface himself, did it all, and BENEVENTANO only provided the general idea, and stamped the performance with his strongly-flavoured and dramatic genius, which drew the half-crowns. Ah, **SIGNOR BENEVENTANO!** your qualities are too rare. There are plenty who can play the violin better than you, but would never arrest the passer by. You were a child of Nature more than of Art, but you had just that one touch which makes the whole world kin ; and the hundreds that nightly listened to you with rapt and breathless attention, did not know and did not care what school you belonged to, for you held the golden key of passion that unlocks all hearts.

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## III.

CAMBRIDGE.

1856-1859.

I WENT up to Trinity College in 1856. I was completely alone. I had an introduction to DR. WHEWELL, the Master

of Trinity. But what was DR. WHEWELL to me,

<sup>55.</sup> DR. WHEWELL or I to DR. WHEWELL? Something, strange

AND to say, we were destined still to be to each other.

SEDGWICK. Of this more anon.

Soon after passing my entrance examination, I was summoned into the great man's presence. In the course of our interview, I ventured rashly to say that I understood Cambridge was more given to mathematics than to classics. DR. WHEWELL replied, with lofty forbearance, that when I had been a little longer at Cambridge I should possibly correct that opinion. As I had entered under the college-tutor, MR. MUNRO, perhaps the most famous Latin scholar of the day, my remark was indeed an unfortunate one, most fully displaying my simplicity and ignorance.

The Master questioned me as to my aims and ambitions. I had none—I told him so very simply—I played the fiddle. He seemed surprised ; but from the first moment of seeing him I took a liking to him, and I believe he did to me. He had been seldom known to notice a Freshman personally, unless it were some public school-boy of distinction. After

my first interview, I was closely questioned at dinner in hall, when I found that WHEWELL was regarded as a sort of ogre, not to be approached without the utmost awe, and to be generally avoided if possible. Of this I had been happily ignorant ; and, indeed, there had been nothing to alarm me in the great man. His physique was that of a sturdy miner ; his face, to my mind, noble, majestic, and, as most thought, ugly. But I shall never look upon his like again. His walk was impressive ; his flowing gown gathered negligently about him. I can see him now, as he stalked across the quad into the Trinity Lodge. He was one of Nature's intellectual monarchs. His reputation was world-wide. I shall never forget that broad forehead, with its bushy eye-brows, and those flashing eyes. I remember him so very distinctly as he used to sit in the Master's stall at chapel ; his very presence seemed to lend a certain dignity to that light and inattentive assembly of collegians, most of whom only "turned up" to be "pricked off," under pain of being "hauled up." In the companion stall sat another noble figure, PROFESSOR SEDGWICK, also of European fame, then professor of geology, and far advanced in years.

Grand old WHEWELL ! encyclopædic mind ! Genial, eloquent Sedgwick ! most loving teacher of fossil truth ! Where are your successors ? Ye were men of large and monumental type. When you departed, one after the other, the very university seemed to shrink. I look back at that time—Whewell, Sedgwick, Donaldson, Munro, all in office to-

gether at Cambridge, whilst Macaulay, Livingstone, Owen, Lord Lawrence, and Tennyson came to dine as guests at the Trinity high table, and appeared in chapel afterwards. Truly there were giants in the land in those days !

Whewell, who contrived to say something rude to everybody he knew sooner or later, never but once spoke a harsh word to me. It was on this wise. He had a particular objection to undergraduates standing on the Trinity bridge and looking over into the river. I suppose he thought it mere idleness—which, indeed, it generally was. I was in feeble health at the time, and one morning I was looking over the bridge, in the mild sunshine of spring, into the river. By came the master, with his rapid and magisterial stride.

“I’ll thank you, Mr. Haweis,” he said abruptly, “not to loiter on the bridge,” and he swept past me angrily, before ever I had time to cap him. I am glad now even of that little memory.

His intellect was immense, his knowledge vast, his virtues many and great, his nature rugged and combative, and his kindness of heart undoubted ; his faults were all on the surface—they were of an irritating and offensive character, and any fool could carp at them. I was not fool enough to be annoyed at the great man’s brusqueness, and before long I had other proofs of his gentleness, forbearance, and even genuine humility. On one occasion, in all the conceit and

“bumptiousness” of a freshman, I wrote a saucy letter in the newspaper, reflecting upon the manner in which the Vice-Chancellors selected the university preachers. Whewell was Vice-Chancellor, and I repented and apologised to him. I have his letter now; kind, gentle, and dignified, without a touch of harshness, with advice like a father’s.

Whewell’s evening parties—called by the freshmen Whewell’s “Stand-ups,” because undergraduates were not supposed to “sit” on these solemn occasions—were most abhorred in my time; but I lived to see a great change.

. . . . .  
The Master married, during my term of college life, Lady Affleck, a charming person, and from the time she became mistress at the Lodge the rugged old lion seemed to grow affable, and gentle, and apparently eager to do what he could to make people “at home.” I have seen his wife go up to him and whisper in his ear, and the Master would nod approval, and thread his way at her bidding through the crowd of guests to someone who had to be introduced or noticed. The parties at the Lodge grew suddenly pleasant and sought after; the men sat down and chatted, and Lady Affleck—a thing unknown in Whewell’s lonely days—introduced the undergraduates to the young ladies present.

When he married, the Master did a very graceful thing. He sent for me one morning, brought Lady Affleck into the drawing-room, and said in his bluff way, “Mr. Haweis,

I wish you to know LADY AFFLECK, my wife. She is musical ; she wishes to hear your violin.” The Master then left me with her, and she got me to arrange to come and play at the Lodge on the following night at a great party. I was to bring my own accompanist. I had played at DR. WHEWELL’s before that night, but that night the master paid me special attention. It was part of his greatness and of his true humility to recognise any sort of merit, even when most different in kind to his own.

WHEWELL’s ability was of a truly cosmic and universal character, but nature had denied him one gift—the gift of

56. music. He always beat time in chapel, and

WHEWELL generally sang atrociously out of tune. I do  
AND MUSIC. not think he had any ear; music to him was something marvellous and fascinating; he could talk learnedly on music, admire music, go to concerts, have music at his house, worry over it, insist upon silence when it was going on; and yet I knew, and he knew that I knew, that he knew nothing about it; it was a closed world to him, a riddle, yet one he was incessantly bent upon solving, and he felt that I had the key to it and he had not.

On that night I played ERNST’s “Elégie,” not quite so hackneyed then as it is now, and some other occasional pieces by ERNST, in which I gave the full rein to my fancy. The Master left his company, and taking a chair in front

of where I stood, remained in absorbed meditation during the performance.

I was naturally a little elated at this mark of respect shown to an unknown freshman in the presence of so many “Heads” of Houses and the *élite* of the University. I played my best and indulged rather freely in a few more or less illegitimate dodges, which I thought calculated to bewilder the great man. I was rewarded, for at the close DR. WHEWELL laid his hand upon my arm. “Tell me one thing; how do you produce that rapid passage, ascending and descending notes of fixed intervals?” I had simply as a *tour de force* glided my whole hand up and down the fourth open string, taking, of course, the complete series of harmonics up and down several times and producing thus the effect of a rapid cadenza with the utmost ease; the trick only requires a certain lightness of touch, and a knowledge of where and when to stop with effect. I replied that I had only used the series of open harmonics which are yielded, according to the well-known mathematical law, by every stretched string when the vibration is interrupted at the fixed harmonic nodes. The artistic application of a law which, perhaps, he had never realised but in theory seemed to delight him intensely, and he listened whilst I repeated the cadenza, and again and again showed him the various intervals on the finger-board, where the open harmonics might be made to speak; a hair’s-breadth one way or the other producing a horrid scratch instead of the sweet

flute-like ring. It struck him as marvellous how a violinist could hit upon the various intervals to such a nicety, as to evoke the harmonic notes. I replied that this was easy enough when the hand was simply swept up and down the string as I had done, but that to hit upon the lesser nodes for single harmonics was one of the recognised violin difficulties. I then showed him a series of *stopped* harmonics, and played, much to his surprise, a tune in stopped harmonics. He was interested to hear that PAGANINI had been the first to introduce this practice, which has since become common property. But I have a little anticipated.

After the anxiety of my entrance examination at Trinity College, which I passed without glory, I solaced my lone-

57. liness by making as much noise as ever I could

on my violin. I had three rooms at the furthest <sup>MY</sup> <sub>NEIGHBOURS.</sub> extremity of the old court leading into the Bishop's Hostel. Open windows commanding two Quads made me a very formidable and undesirable neighbour. Incessant practising with a saloon pistol—with which I was a crack shot—on my doors added a general liveliness to the situation. Occasionally I received midnight expostulations. It was agreed at last that firing was not to go on after eight o'clock, nor music after ten. This latter rule was, I admit, more honoured in the breach than the observance, and often have I seen MR. FROST or JOHN

LUNN—musical fellows of neighbouring colleges—pounding away in their shirt-sleeves, cigar in mouth, at my piano till past midnight, while I myself, the present EARL OF MAR, and MR. GEORGE COOKE—still a notable violoncello player in London (1883)—&c., made up the quartet or quintet in the rear. The consumption of beer and buttered muffins after tea was unusually large on certain hot nights. The listeners who stepped in to smoke and chat, declared that under the infliction of music additional support was absolutely needed. The dean occasionally sent polite and deprecatory messages from over the way, whilst Messrs. HAMMOND and BURN, fellows of Trinity, who “kept” just underneath me on the same stair-case, exhibited a certain angelic forbearance with the pandemonium upstairs which, after the lapse of twenty-five years, I cannot sufficiently admire.

My mathematics may have been weak, and my classics uncertain, but it was impossible to ignore my existence. I

58.  
I PLAY A SOLO.

had not been up a fortnight when the president of the Cambridge University Musical Society called upon me. He believed I played the violin. “How did he know that?” I asked. He laughed out, “Everybody in the place knows it.” Then and there he requested me to join the Musical Society, and play a solo at the next concert. I readily agreed, and from that time I became solo violinist at the Cambridge Musical

Society, and played a solo at nearly every concert in the Town Hall for the next three years.

I confess to some nervousness on my first public appearance at a University Concert. It was a grand night. STERNDALE BENNETT, our new professor of music, himself conducted his "May Queen," and I think MR. COLERIDGE, an enthusiastic amateur and old musical star at the University, since very well known in London, sang. I had selected as my *cheval de bataille*, RODE's air in G with variations, and to my own surprise, when my turn came to go on, I was quite shaky. The hall was crammed, the Master of Trinity sat in the front row with other heads of colleges and their families. I tuned in the ante-room. Someone offered me a glass of wine. I had never resorted to stimulants before playing, but I rashly drank it; it was in my head at once. STERNDALE BENNETT conducted me to the platform. I was a total stranger to the company—a freshman in my second month only. My fingers felt limp and unrestrained, my head was half swimming. The crowd looked like a mist. I played with exaggerated expression. I tore the passion to tatters. I trampled on the time. I felt the excess of sentiment was bad, and specially abhorrent to STERNDALE BENNETT, who followed my vagaries like a lamb, bless him for ever!

But the thing took. The style was new; at least it was unconventional and probably daring, for I really hardly knew what I was about. The Air was listened to in dead silence,

half out of curiosity no doubt ; but a burst of applause followed the last die-away notes. I plunged into the variations ; I felt my execution slovenly and beneath my usual mark ; but I was more than once interrupted by applause, and at the close of the next cantabile movement of extreme beauty, which I played better—a sort of meditation on the original air—the enthusiasm rose to fever pitch ; men stood up in the distant gallery and waved their caps, and I remained holding my violin, unable to proceed with the last rapid variation. When silence was restored I played this atrociously ; I hardly played it at all, it was quite wild. STERNDALE BENNETT, seeing that it was all up with me that night, hurried and banged it through anyhow ; but the critical faculty of the room was gone, so was my head ; I had won by a toss, and although then, and often afterwards, owing to neglect of practice, I was frequently not up to my own mark, my position as solo violinist at the University Concerts was never disputed up to the time that I took my degree.

My most extensive effort was DE BERIOT's first concerto, which I played through by heart, of course, with full orchestra. It did not go well, the band was not perfectly drilled and too often smothered me ; but I was bent on playing with a full orchestra, and I had my will ; but I never repeated the experiment at those concerts. As I was invariably encored I taxed my

ingenuity to devise new sensations. “Old Dog Tray,” the words of which were at that time very familiar, was a favourite *encore*, the first verse taken cheerfully, and each verse up to the sausage verse increasing in pathos and emotion until the climax was reached in—

Some tempting mutton pies  
In which I recognise  
The flavour of my old dog Tray.  
Old dog Tray he was faithful, etc. etc.

The audience were never tired of following the sound-drama conducted by me through its various stages, until the sausage verse invariably broke down amidst roars of laughter.

In my first term, as I have intimated, I had formed a quartet society, which met in my rooms. The two violins were the EARL OF MAR and myself; the tenor 60. MY QUARTET varied, but MR. GEORGE COOKE was our standing SOCIETY. violoncello. HAYDN, in some respects the greatest quartet writer, was our staple, but we went into MOZART and BEETHOVEN, and we worked up the great BEETHOVEN septet with the assistance of the piano. The Canzonet quartet and MENDELSSOHN’s quintet were amongst our favourites, but the last movement in the great quintet was a *pièce de résistance* which we never quite overcame.

To this close and genial little society I owe my practical acquaintance with most of the famous quartets. I was a great deal too much “about” to do any real good with

classics or mathematics. I was playing somewhere nearly every night, and had the *entrée* at most evening parties held at the Trinity Lodge, the Master of Sidney-Sussex, DR. PHELPS—brother of the great actor—St. John's, Catherine's Hall (PHILPOTT's, now Bishop of Worcester), HARVEY GOODWIN (now Bishop of Carlisle), &c. My town connection was also pretty extensive. At the house of my kind friends, MR. and MRS. R. POTTS (of Euclid celebrity), I was ever welcome. There I met ADAMS, of comet celebrity; BABINGTON, who popped a little American weed into the Cam one day, which choked all the rivers in England for several years. Many other scholars and men of science were frequent visitors at MR. POTTS' house on Parker's Piece, but I think I was perhaps as frequent as any of them.

HENRY KINGSLEY, Fellow and Tutor of Sidney, met me at the house of HOPKINS, the eminent mathematician, one night, and was so pleased with my playing of BEETHOVEN'S F sonata that he gave me the whole set. He took me to his room and showed me a most interesting series of TURNER's water-colours, of which he was a great collector. He pointed out the rapidity and eager fidelity of TURNER's work. Two extraordinary water-colour studies of a descending avalanche in the Alps struck me very much. TURNER had dashed off the first where the snow cataract began, and, rushing to

61.

HENRY  
KINGSLEY  
AND TURNER.

another spot lower down the mountain, he was just in time to make another sketch before the avalanche had reached the bottom. I also saw several sketches all blurred. TURNER had doubled up the paper, wet as it was, and put it into his pocket, thus destroying his work as soon as he had "taken his observation." In others the rapid painter had dabbled away quickly over a folded crease of the paper. KINGSLEY had stretched it, cut out the white angle, and joined together the parts that tallied.

My father had been a great admirer of TURNER, and a great reader of RUSKIN. I could just remember TURNER's later pictures appearing in the Academy, and I distinctly remember my father's reading out passages from the immortal *Seven Lamps* and *Stones of Venice*. I was, therefore, prepared for KINGSLEY's attentions ; and as I was able to feed him with one art, he generously gave me all the pleasure he could with another. I was very grateful to KINGSLEY for his friendly appreciation. He never treated me as merely a fiddler—this was the tone of the fellows and tutors and public schoolmen at my own college. I began to see that if a man does one thing well, he cannot easily get credit for doing anything else. I remembered this when I went into the Church and dropped my violin. I did not, indeed, spend much time at college over my class work, but I spent long hours in the University library and pored incessantly over DANTE, GOETHE, HEINE, and the German philosophers—HEGEL, FICHTE, SCHELLING, and

the SCHLEGELS—with dictionaries and translations. I had a passion for writing, though, unfortunately, I had nothing to say. MR. W. G. CLARKE, the public orator, and one of my examiners, whilst declaring my hand-writing to be almost illegible—a statement in which he was correct—observed with a friendly smile, which stung me (in my heart full of literary ambition) to the quick, “More at home with the violin bow, Mr. Haweis, than the pen—eh?” And I remember one night, when I was dining at the Master of Sidney’s, the great DOCTOR DONALDSON saying across the table to HARVEY GOODWIN (now Bishop of Carlisle), also one of my senate house examiners, “Well, I never examined Mr. Haweis in classics or mathematics, but I can bear witness that, whatever he may be in the senate house, he invariably passes a brilliant examination in the concert-room.”

I could never get the smallest recognition of any kind at the University from the authorities for anything but music.

62. I tried hard for the prize poem on “Delhi,” for “THE LION”  
AND the English essay on “Mary Queen of Scots,” in  
“THE BEAR.” vain. But my literary enthusiasm could not be quenched, and, with the assistance of one or two clever undergraduates, who have since risen to name and fame, and whom I will therefore spare, I floated a University magazine called *The Lion*.

My own contributions alone would have been quite

enough to damn that preposterous serial ; but GEORGE OTTO TREVELYAN, who had just come up from Harrow, thought it would be well and pleasant to hasten the process. So he issued *The Bear*, which consisted of short parodies of articles that had appeared in *The Lion*. The thing was cleverly and good-humouredly done, and to me the moral was “stick to the fiddle.” *The Lion* expired with a bumptious roar in the third number ; it contained, however, the only readable article I had yet written—readable because written from my heart—on “MENDELSSOHN.” We got a vast deal of fun out of our little venture. The greatest success was certainly in calling forth *The Bear* which slew it, and a wag suggested that a new University magazine should be started called *David*, to “slay both the *Lion* and the *Bear*.”

From that time I ceased to instruct an ungrateful and prejudiced University, but I continued for some years to

63. deluge the provincial press with columns of in-

NEWSPAPER flated bombast on a variety of topics, such as

ARTICLES. transcendental metaphysics, the position of women,

and other matters about which I knew absolutely nothing.

As I now look back upon those scrap-books full of articles,

it is inconceivable to me how they ever got printed. But I

had always the pen of a ready writer, and along with it the

common misfortune of having very little to say. But such

matters only touch at certain points my musical life, and I willingly return to my buttons.

One day as I was sitting in my arm-chair with an open book upon my knee, contemplating vaguely the row of

64. china musicians' heads on little brackets over

OLD VENUA : A STRANGE my mantel-piece, a knock came at the door.

VISITOR. My "oak was sported," and I accordingly "did the dead." I was in no mood for interruption. In front of me, in the centre of my china row of busts—HANDEL, MOZART, HAYDN, CHOPIN—stood MENDELSSOHN's bust, raised above the rest and draped with black velvet, with F.M.B. in gold on the velvet. The china face at times, as the light caught the shadows about the delicate mouth, seemed to smile down upon me. The high forehead surrounded by wavy hair, the aquiline nose——What? more knockings! I rose at last, and opening the door brusquely was confronted by a strange figure with a sort of wide plaid waistcoat, well-made frock-coat, heavily-dyed thin whiskers, and dark wig (as I well saw when the broad-brimmed hat was off), yellow gloves and patent boots. Middle-aged? No—in spite of the wig and showy get up—old, very old, but oddly vigorous, inclined to *embonpoint*, ruddy, florid, perhaps choleric face, marked features overspread now with a beaming smile and a knowing twinkle in the rather rheumy eyes.

I never saw such an odd man. My anger evaporated. I laughed out almost, and instinctively extended my hand and shook that of the irresistible stranger warmly, although I did not know him from Adam.

"Beg pardon," he said, "may I come in? I tell you, my friend, my name is VENUA—never heard of me—no matter—old VENUA knows you; heard you play at the Town Hall—got the stuff in you; you can play d——d well; you can play better den dat—nature gif you all dis gift—you practise and den you play like ze d——l himself. Old VENUA, dey say to me, he know all about it—he can tell you how to play. Forty year ago you should have heard me play de fiddle by—I play de fiddle now; gif me your fiddle—wonderful tone your fiddle—where is your fiddle?"

All this was uttered without a pause, very rapidly.

The strange, rambling, stuttering, energetic, decided old creature had now rolled into my room; he had sat down and pulled out an enormous silk pocket-handkerchief. Then an old gold snuff-box. "This gif me by ze Grand Duke of Hesse Darmstadt. You take a pinch. Oh no! You are young man. You know noding of snuff—bad 'abit—young man, bad 'abit! never you take snuff! Old VENUA can't get on widout his snuff. All de bigwigs take snuff with old VENUA—but where is your fiddle? bring him out I say. Wonderful tone—let me see him."

What a jargon! Was it Italian, French, or German-English? I could never make out. In an old book, only the other day, I met with a short biography of a certain VENUA, violinist, who flourished at the beginning of this century. Old VENUA, of Cambridge, was undoubtedly this man. He was very long past his prime and utterly for-

gotten. I brought him out the fiddle; he put it to his chin; in a moment I could see he had played—his touch, execution, all but his intonation were gone, but his style was first-rate and his expression admirable in intention.

From that day I and old VENUA became close allies. He used to ask me to dine with him, generally on Sunday, and his ceaseless flow of anecdote and dramatic style of conversation amused me greatly.

He had known PAGANINI, he had seen BEETHOVEN, he had chatted with SPOHR, he remembered the first Napoleon. He  
65. mimicked HAYDN's style of conversation, violin  
VENUA'S in hand, as though he had been intimate with  
TALK. him too. Yet this was in 1859, and HAYDN died  
in 1809.

“Gif me a sobjech,” says HAYDN. “Zo!—here—Tra-la-doi-e-dee-dee, &c. &c. Zat will do, mein freund. HAYDN—make you on zat sobjech—a beautiful melody, and work it wonderful; gif you him a start off, he do all the rest. No quartet like the HAYDN quartet, my young freund—he is the great master of the string instrument—he knows the just combinazione—he gif all their due. SPOHR he all first fiddle—he make all de rest lacqueys to first fiddle. MENDELSSOHN he make an orchestra of his quartet. BEETHOVEN vonderful always. MOZART he learn all of HAYDN—he come after him and die before him. He never write quartet

better zan de Papa HAYDN—he find new ideas and he write new things—he great master of vat you call de form—of his composition—but in de string quartet HAYDN ze great creator—a Brince—a real Brince and founder of ze quartet art!"

VENUA loved the violin, and his impromptu lectures upon it taught me much—always characteristic, humorous, genial, and to the point.

"If you want to make a man irritable, discontented, restless, miserable, give him a violin."

"Why?" said I.

"Because," he replied—and I will now resume to some extent the use of my own language—"the violin is the most exacting and inexorable of non-human things. A loose joint somewhere and he goes 'tubby' (a term used to express a dull vibration), a worn finger-board and he squeaks, a bridge too high and his note grows hard and bitter, or too low and he whizzes, or too forward and one string goes loud, or too backward and two strings go soft and weak; and the sound-post (*i.e.* the little peg which bears the strain on the belly and back), mein Gott! dat is de Teffel." But, correcting himself, he added, "No, the French are right, they call it the soul of the violin, *l'âme du violon*; and it is the soul—if that is not right, all the fiddle goes wrong. A man may sit the whole morning worrying the sound-post a shade this way or that, and at last, in despair, he will give it up; then he will go to the bridge and waste his whole

afternoon fidgeting it about, and then he will give that up. A hair's-breadth this way with the bridge—oh! the fourth string is lovely; but, bah! the second and third are killed; a little back then, and now the fourth is dead, and the *chanterelle* (*i.e.* first string) sings like a lark—misery! it is the only string vat sing at all. Give him a fiddle!" cried the old gentleman, gesticulating; "yes, give him a fiddle, it will make him mad!"

Interspersed with such droll exaggerations were excellent hints, such as, "Leave your bridge and your sound-post alone if ever you get the fiddle to sound near right; don't change your bridge unless you are absolutely obliged—sound-board, neck, head, nut, everything, but not the bridge; a fiddle and a bridge that have lived for years together love each other as man and wife; let them alone, my young freund, vy make mischief?" and old VENUA's eye twinkled as he chuckled at his own joke, and never ceased talking and flourishing his arms.

It was VENUA who first taught me about the fabric of the violin what my old master, OURY—who was a pupil of MORI—first made me feel about violin playing—a tender love and sympathy for the instrument as well as the art.

What was VENUA's connection with Cambridge I never could make out. He seemed independent. He had long ceased to teach or play, yet he was frequently away, and appeared only at intervals, always retaining the same lodg-

ings at Cambridge, and generally giving me a call when he was in town. When I came up, about a year after leaving the University, for my voluntary theological examination, I inquired for my old friend VENUA; but he was gone, and no one could give me any news of him. I never saw him again. He remained to me simply a detached episode in my musical life.

I think it was in my second year (1858) at college that a few friends, more enterprising than discreet, revealed to me

66. a design which promised to yield considerable

*A CONCERT FREAK.* amusement, if not profit. They proposed to get

out large hand-bills in a town some fifteen miles away, stating that a distinguished foreign company, consisting of Signor this, that, and the other, and Herr so-and-so, would appear on a certain evening at the Town Hall, and give a concert of an exceptionally attractive character. I agreed to be of the party, and we all disguised ourselves with false hair, I wearing a flowing beard and ample moustache. We cultivated broken English. Only one of us—who acted as agent and made arrangements at the inn, saw to the posters, and took the money—spoke our native tongue with anything like fluency. We arrived about six o'clock; the concert was at eight. We walked through the town in heavy great coats, well muffled up, although it was now the middle of summer, and admired the large bills on the hoardings; my own

name was specially big, as the celebrated German violinist, HERR ERNSTEIN. Things were going merrily, and it was rumoured that we should have a full room, when at six o'clock the news arrived in the town that one of the most respectable inhabitants of the place had been run over on the railway. This cast a sudden gloom over the place. There was talk about postponing the concert, but several people had taken tickets, and we felt bound to go through with it. Very few, however, turned up, and the attendance was so thin that it became a question whether we should not offer the audience their money back and suspend operations, out of deference to the wide-spread feeling. We ultimately compromised the matter by going through with the first part of the concert only. We none of us made our fortunes that night, and we returned to Cambridge by the last train rather crest-fallen, and considerably after midnight.

The moon was shining brightly, the air was warm and balmy. We walked from the station to the old market-

place. None of us had the courage to repair

67. MUSIC AND MOONLIGHT. to our colleges; besides, we had all provided ourselves with *exeats*, so that our reappearance about one o'clock in the morning would have looked, to say the least, odd.

The Cambridge market-place was deserted. We held a council of war. We were in no particular hurry, and as

we could not make up our minds what to do, I took out my violin, sat down on a stone-slab, and waked the echoes.

Out of a dark side-street presently strode, or rather shuffled up, a strange-looking man. As I played on he sidled up to me and stood gazing at me in mute astonishment. When I ceased he gasped out :

“ Who be you, Sir? ”

“ Who should you think? ” I said.

“ Dun-no, Sir ; never ‘eered anything like it afore in all my born days ! ”

“ Fond of music? ” I said cheerfully, and was preparing to give him another taste of my quality, when he laid his grimy hand on my arm, and peering into my face, said :

“ You jist tell me one thing, Sir. Be you one of the gents that’s a coming down next week with MR. JULLIEN’S band? ”

“ Why—if they’re only coming down next week, I should say not.”

My companion, our agent, here plucked me by the sleeve ; he had gained admittance to an inn hard by, and it being now nearly two o’clock we concluded to turn in. I have come to the conclusion that adventures of this kind are better before and afterwards ; at the time they are often but poor sport, but they are anticipated with pleasure and recalled with interest. I am not aware that our secret

was ever betrayed, or that our escapade was ever discovered.

Towards the close of my career at Cambridge a sort of rival to the Musical Society sprang up, which met at Sidney

68. Hall, and was largely choral. MRS. ELLICOTT  
MRS. (wife of the Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol) was  
ELLICOTT.

the vocal star at Cambridge in my time, and her services were usually in request whenever the concert could by any stretch of imagination be called of a private or a collegiate character. On special occasions, however, the Fitzwilliam programme admitted instrumental music, and the last occasion on which I played in public at Cambridge was when I led BEETHOVEN's Grand Septuor for the Fitzwilliam Society in Sidney Hall.

What my life at Cambridge might have been without my violin I cannot say. Had I worked harder at Latin, Greek,

69. and mathematics, I sometimes ask myself, Who  
WHAT DOOTH would have been the better for it now? Had  
IT PROFIT? I even got a fellowship, should I have been the better for it then? Had I read less miscellaneously, written less voluminously, played less habitually, and known half a dozen studious men only, instead of hundreds of all sorts, during those three years of college life, should I have been better or worse fitted for my after life than the studious men who went up with me

were for theirs? Where are those studious men? One of the cleverest drank himself to death in India. Another senior wrangler—and not the only one I have known suffer thus—became unfit for several years for all mental exertion, and is now a lawyer—like any other lawyer. Some have subsided into the Church and are forgotten in country livings, useful, obscure, happy. Others were expected to do great things, but have not done them. Some are professors; others fellows of colleges, like other fellows of colleges; many are married and in every sense done for, and many are dead; a few have risen to eminence, but these were in no one instance the men who attained the very highest honours. CECIL RAIKES, who usually sat opposite me in hall and was freshman in my year, is, I suppose (1883), in the running for the highest Parliamentary prizes. GEORGE OTTO TREVELYAN, who came up in my second year, always brilliant, many-sided, genial, has added to his versatile acquirements the qualities of a leading statesman. FAWCETT, also my contemporary, is another remarkable instance of academical distinction and Parliamentary success. I cannot at this moment recall any distinguished writer, man of science, lawyer, or divine now before the world, who, during that time (1857–9), also obtained the highest honours at Cambridge, but others might probably assist my memory.

Of this I am certain, that the academical course paralyses some, develops others, and exerts over a considerable number no sort of mental influence whatever. Over me the

academical course exerted no sort of mental influence whatever. I shall perhaps be told that this was my own fault. Perhaps it was. I knew as much mathematics, and quite as much Latin and Greek, when I went up as when I took my degree. If I knew more history and philosophy, that was not due to the University training—the history and philosophy which the University required was just the sort of history and philosophy I did not happen to know. Almost all the knowledge which has been of any real use to me in the world I have acquired since my University proclaimed me Master of Arts. All that sort of knowledge which has enabled me to make money by my pen, to write books, to preach sermons, to give Royal Institution lectures, to organise parishes, to write leaders and edit journals, is of a kind which the University training not only does not impart, but tends rather to discourage.

The highest University training wins the highest University prizes, but it does not fit men for the highest honours which the world has to give. These are won generally by your good all-round men, your good classic, your senior optime or low wrangler; and sometimes—as in the case of TENNYSON, who won the Prize Poem at Cambridge, or my late lamented friend, the historian J. R. GREEN at Oxford (both good classics)—by men who have attained little if any University distinction in either classics or mathematics.

That I did not profit as I ought to have done by the studies of the place I freely admit. That I fiddled away

much of my time I cannot deny. But that I *wasted* it I cannot allow, although a M.A. degree is all the academical result I have to show for three years of elaborate and expensive training at Trinity College, Cambridge.

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## IV.

## ITALY.

1860.

I TOOK my degree in 1859 and disappeared from the University for more than a year. I was still not in good

70. health, and my father thought that a little

WITH foreign travel might be good for me. I started  
GARIBALDI. with £80 to begin with, for Italy *via* Paris, and

with strict injunctions to keep out of the way of the Italian Revolution then going on under GARIBALDI, and, I may add, CAVOUR. How I was nearly roasted alive travelling straight through from Paris to Milan in the middle of June; how I found myself at Genoa in the autumn, and, being seized with the fever of the Revolution, went straight down to Naples, assisted at the siege of Capua—saw GARIBALDI on the battle-field—heard him address the mob at Naples—witnessed the entrance of VICTOR EMMANUEL into Naples, induced him to write his memoirs, and corresponded with him, narrowly escaped assassination on the Chiaja, saw CAVOUR, RICASOLI, the young princes, the beautiful and

unfortunate Queen of Naples, TÜRR, COZENZ, MEDICI, RONDI, one of GARIBALDI's aides-de-camp, and all the Garibaldian heroes with whom I mixed daily at St. Angelo, Caserta, Capua, Santa Maria, and Naples; saw, for the first time, Pope PIUS IX. (to whom I was presented twenty years afterwards), and was just in time to assist at the peace celebrations and great *Te Deum* at Milan, in the presence of the King and CAOUR and DELLA MARMORA; all these and many other golden memories of the sunny south in the great historical year A.D. 1860 belong to another side of my auto-biography, which I shall probably never think it worth while to write.

The part which music played in the Italian Revolution was remarkable. A certain gay and intrepid march tune,

71.

characteristically called "Garibaldi's Hymn,"  
GARIBALDI'S was shouted, blown, scraped, and rattled on  
HYMN.

drums in and out of season. The whole spirit of the volunteer movement seemed to be in it. When I first heard it at Genoa, it sounded poor and commonplace; but as day by day and all day long it sounded in my ears, it began at last to ring in my head; and by the time I got to Naples I was humming and whistling it with all the world. To see the jaunty, ragged volunteers marching along the hot roads covered with white marble dust, and keeping pace to "Garibaldi's Hymn," is one of my most vivid memories. It was to Italians of 1860 what

FAC-SIMILE OF GARIBALDI'S HANDWRITING.

(Letter to the Rev. H. R. Haweis.)

February 1870

Miss Clara Haweis

Preziose per il  
gentile invito invia-  
tami nostra. Gior-  
mano, andò in  
Inghilterra persona.

Ora scrivo che si  
arriva con questi cor-  
rieri. E in Italiano, e  
mi diritti si sia  
indifferente l'esser  
Italiano o francese.

Ho ricevuto i tre M -  
Dell'Angelo che gentilmente  
mi inviate e sono ben  
grate.

Dottor

G. Garibaldi



the "Marseillaise" was to the French of 1793—but as much purer and more joyous than that fierce and gloomy stave, as the movement for freedom under GARIBALDI and MAZZINI was brighter and purer than the confused and murderous cries for liberty in 1793 under ROBESPIERRE and DANTON.

The most interesting memorials of GARIBALDI that  
72. remain to me are his autograph letters and his  
<sup>A LETTER FROM</sup> MS. memoirs. I have printed a fac-simile of a  
~~GARIBALDI.~~ short note, one of several received about that  
time. The following is a translation:—

Caprera, February 8, 1870.

MY DEAR HAWEIS,

Thank you for your kind invitation to take up my quarters in your house, but I am not going to England just at present. I write to you by this courier in Italian: let me know whether it is indifferent to you whether I write in French or Italian. I received the numbers of *The Argosy* with your account of me, and I am grateful to you for them.

Yours,

G. GARIBALDI.

Looking back upon that exciting time I marvel at my good fortune. How I escaped the chances of disease and

73. danger of all kinds, through which I passed scathless, I cannot imagine. A special Providence must have been watching over me. I travelled nine months in Italy, after losing my great-coat and having most of my luggage stolen. I neglected every

HAIR-  
BREADTH  
ESCAPES.

precaution and risked every danger. During the siege of Capua I was more than once nearly shot by the Neapolitan riflemen, twice on the point of assassination, and I narrowly escaped being blown to pieces by a shell at the batteries of St. Angelo.

To help the poor Garibaldians in the camp, I nearly starved myself outside the walls of Capua during the bombardment. They had my brandy, and my biscuits, and my cash ; often too my broken-down horse, and at my Naples hotel the houseless and purseless ones sometimes shared even my bedroom. All day long, under a burning sun, I got soaked to the skin, with little get-at-able to eat or drink, but coffee and bread in the morning and some wretched apology for a meal at night. Provisions were scarce, and every restaurant in Santa Maria was cleaned out. A light shawl was all I had to keep off chill, malaria, and fever raging all round me. I drank freely the polluted water of Naples. I ate freely its dangerous red melons, inhaled the pestiferous air of its overcrowded back streets, in that monstrously unsanitary and overcrowded time ; yet not once had I a touch of fever or any ailment whatever, except fits of exhaustion consequent upon overheating and over-excitement, under-feeding and general bodily fatigue. My rickety constitution, which the disastrous malady of my boyhood had failed to shatter, must have been made of iron, and I dare say I shall live to the age of Methusaleh. I remember now how the small-pox

spared me when it raged as an epidemic in my first parish, St. Peter's, Bethnal Green ; how the cholera spared me when it raged in my second East End parish, St. Peter's, Stepney. People who enjoy this kind of luck usually get hit at last ; but I cannot but reflect, with wonder and thankfulness, that during the twenty years I have been in the Church, preaching in London on an average twice every Sunday, although often feeble and suffering, I have seldom been absent from my pulpit, and never once been unable to officiate, through indisposition. I think few even of the more robust of the London clergy can say as much.

I was greatly struck by the musical poverty of Italy. Even the performances in the Scala at Milan were poor in

comparison with the London and Paris opera-

74. MUSIC IN ITALY. houses. The street music at Naples and at

Venice was characteristic. In Florence and Pisa the guitar was played with a certain *élan* by the young men as they walked home at night, trolling out some graceful love-song or drinking ditty with light chorus, very different from our heavy drinking choruses. But the mechanical organs, with their eternal fragments of VERDI, were extremely wearisome, and the Italian pianoforte-playing, even when good, had little charm for ears accustomed to the inspirations of BEETHOVEN, SCHUMANN, MENDELSSOHN, CHOPIN, and MOZART. Still, the romance school of the pianoforte in Italy is a distinct one and not

to be ignored. FUMAGALLI was a man of real genius, who died too young; and TITO MATTEI now resident in England, has won many converts to the brilliant, sentimental, and sensational style ever dear to the heart of the Italian. But the classical reaction at Rome (1883), under SIGNOR SGAMBATI, threatens to make serious way. Less fertile in melody than VERDI, and more severe than LISZT, it may end in falling between two stools; but the ability of its founder and leader, SGAMBATI, is undoubted, and was duly recognised when he appeared in London, in 1882, at the Philharmonic and Crystal Palace concerts, as well as at an Italian *matinée* at my house, when he played with the Florentine violinist PAPINI, the Sicilian baritone VERGARA, and my old friend of good Garibaldian intentions, SIGNOR LI CALSI.

I have a few charming memories connected with music in Italy, but they all circle round my valued friend,

75. C. H. DEACON, now so well known and so justly

ALONE AT  
MILAN. esteemed in the musical world of London. I

arrived at Milan one Friday. The sun was pitilessly hot, the sky wearisomely blue. Sick, worn-out with all-night travel, for the first time in my life hundreds of miles away from any human being who cared whether I was dead or alive, my spirits were at their lowest ebb. I got in about the middle of the day, and, depositing my one portmanteau at the Hotel "Reale," wandered aimlessly

out into the broiling streets, and, being hungry and faint, entered a *café*. Everyone seemed half asleep; no one understood French, and so no one understood me. It was evidently not eating time at Milan. I could not touch the black coffee and stale sponge-cakes, so I got back to my bedroom, ordered a lemonade, and lay down thinking of "Home, sweet Home," and the friends in Brunswick Square, Brighton, whom I might have been lunching with had I not been such a fool as to come to Italy. I lodged at my capital Milanese hotel (1860)—breakfast, bed, and dinner for 7 frs. a day. At Florence and Rome the prices in those days were but 8 frs., and at Genoa 6 frs. I had not spoken to a soul for many hours. I never felt so utterly lost and alone before, nor have I ever felt so since. The second day I met at the *table d'hôte* a friendly face, the face of a good and genial man. It was the REV. C. H. ANDREWS, then English chaplain at Milan. I solaced myself with some talk. The English Church service was held in a large room in our hotel. The next day was Sunday. I went to service in the morning. It was like sitting by the waters of Babylon; but I saw some English faces in that strange land, and began to take courage. ANDREWS was my only resource, so towards ANDREWS's door I made my way in the afternoon.

On entering, I found a gentleman seated—thin face, full moustache, well-dressed, refined in manner, and

charming in conversation. I was about to retire when both bade me be seated. ANDREWS at once presented me to this stranger. It was Mr. C. H. DEACON, the pillar of the English Church at Milan, and general friend and benefactor of all itinerant and homeless tourists who drifted into the English Church on their way through Milan.

To MR. and MRS. DEACON—since members of my congregation in London—and my good friend ANDREWS, I owe

some of my happiest hours in Italy. On the hot

76.

GOLDEN  
NIGHTS.

nights ANDREWS and I, now become great friends, used to make our way naturally to DEACON's charming house, and there, at the invitation of MRS. DEACON—most delightful of hostesses—drink unlimited tea and make music. I had not brought my violin to Italy—I should certainly have lost it if I had. I lost nearly everything that I had with me in Italy that year. I never touched a violin in Italy, but I soon found that DEACON was a splendid pianist; and at his house I met PEZZE, the violoncellist, and SESSA, the violinist. DEACON introduced me to REYNOLDS, who called himself Vice-Consul; and I remember that LORD BYRON's cook, who was still living, served us up an admirable dinner one night at the Consul's residence.

The heat being overpowering, and the natives having chosen that moment for clearing the drains at my hotel,

the place became little better than a pest-house, and we concluded to go to the lakes. We went to Como. There DEACON joined us.

I think it was in the Italian Alps that I first noticed the poetical effect of bells. The sound of convent bells across

the Lake of Lugano, or over Como, where the

77. *A STRANGE BELL.* sound is hemmed in between Carddenabbia and Bellagio, is to me full of haunting memories.

There were other bells, too, on the Lake of Como, of a very puzzling kind, as will appear from what follows.

The deceptiveness of bell-sounds upon the water can only be compared to the deceptiveness of objects seen lying under the water, and the refraction of sound-waves to the ear is about equal to the refraction of light-waves to the eye. I remember rowing on the Lake of Como on one still summer night, and I heard what seemed to me the clear tinkle of a goat-bell, which I supposed to be coming from the sloping banks of the lake. Distant it certainly seemed, and yet singularly distinct. As I rowed on, it still sounded from afar, when suddenly through the darkness I heard a loud Italian oath from a boat a short distance from me. I paid no attention, but rowed on; the boat rowed after me with a flood of Italian Billingsgate. My mettle was now up, and, shipping oars, I repaired to the stern, and replied with all the strength and vivacity which my small acquaintance with Italian slang permitted.

Of the cause of dispute I was utterly ignorant, but I thought an unprovoked attack deserved a spirited reply; and so I freely devoted my unknown friend to the Diavolo, “Mars, Bacchus, Virorum,” and the other pagan deities to which, by his vocabulary, I deemed him to be most partial. Between the pauses of our brisk civilities I heard the clear tinkle of the distant goat-bell (what had that to do with him?) and the chiming of the convent clocks all along the shore of the lake, when, suddenly leaning over the boat, my hand touched a large cork, on which hung a floating bell, and I perceived I had for some time been dragging, entangled astern, the fisherman’s night-line, with its alarm destined to give warning against such marauders as myself. The distant bell, in fact, had been swinging close under my nose! There was no goat—only a cork, and my friend thought I was making a night-raid upon his fish! At that moment our boats met, and instead of coming to blows we explained, shook hands with much polite laughter, and, on one side at least, paid up with effusion.

Our hotel at Carddenabbia overlooked the lake. There was a grand piano in the great saloon, with a marble balcony opening upon the water. Here, when the moon was full upon Como, would DEACON play to us  
78. FULL MOON. after dinner. The music went out into the night. The white mist bathed the opposite promontory of Bellagio. I can just remember a face on the balcony in the twilight

—and eyes, too. I was in my twenty-third year. I no longer sighed for Brunswick Square—I was reconciled to Italy.

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## V.

## BETHNAL GREEN AND WESTMINSTER.

1861-1864.

I HAD for years been an irregular student of theology, and I had read very carefully most of the standard theological books—PEARSON, BUTLER, PALEY, HOOKER—and also weighted myself heavily with the High Church theology—PUSEY, NEWMAN, MANNING, KEBLE, MISS SEWELL, &c., besides reading MAURICE and W. F. ROBERTSON. This preparation laid me peculiarly open to the influence of *Essays and Reviews*, which I eagerly devoured at Florence on my way home, and I was soon afterwards further enlightened by the writings of JOWETT and COLENZO. These last are the men who gave me some hope for the future of the Church of England. The seed of something like an enlightened and liberal theology seemed to be sown. Theology soon absorbed the whole of my attention, and music went to the wall on my return from Italy. I went up to Cambridge for my voluntary theological examination in 1861, was ordained the same year,

went straight to my lodgings, in the district of St. Peter's, Hackney Road, Bethnal Green, and my violin career was virtually closed.

From the time that I entered the Church I have never played to any real purpose. I resolved to make that sacri-

fice, and no subsequent reflection has led me to

80. repent of my decision. I could never have  
<sup>A SACRIFICE.</sup>

played the violin by halves, and had I come up to London and entered the Church in the character of a fiddling parson, I should in all probability never have got credit for, or applied myself seriously to win, any other position. At all events, I should have been heavily weighted and laid myself open to many temptations. I should always have been coming West in search of musical society and distraction, and people would have said, as indeed my old friends have said, and as my caricaturists continue to say, "He should have stuck to the one thing which he could do well, and not meddled with theology." These good people sometimes gave me credit for having made an heroic sacrifice. They knew nothing about it. The sacrifice I made was a very small one. From the age of eight to the age of twenty-three I had played the fiddle in season and out of season. Applause had lost its charm for me. I was hardened to flattery. My own critical taste disenchanted me with my own performances. Nothing but the best suited me, and I knew I never could attain to that as

an executant myself, because I never could take up the violin professionally. Then, fiddling was not my only taste. I had a passion for oratory, for literature, for the study of human nature, and for church work. For a time my new parochial sphere with its special enthusiasms expelled everything else.

I know not what glamour in those days hung over the grimy and repulsive aspects of Bethnal Green life. The

81. reeking streets seemed beautiful to me in the

AN EAST END PARISH. evening sunshine; the unwashed and multitu-

dinous children, feeding on garbage in the gutter, filled me with infinite tenderness and pity, the more so because they seemed so happy; the sick poor dying in back rooms, the workhouse wards, the close factory houses packed with pale girls starving at straw-bonnet work, the old men eternally dipping dolls' heads, the button-hole sewers, the infatuated weavers, descendants of the Huguenot refugees, still working their antiquated hand-looms at famine prices—all these scenes of my daily life seemed to me then exquisitely pathetic, novel, interesting, and exciting. I was not in the least depressed by the surrounding misery; I was not responsible for it. It was a problem to work at. I was strangely exhilarated by it. I was not left to struggle alone. The aristocracy of my congregation were the small tradespeople. They rallied round me nobly, and I loved them; they seemed to me infinitely good, and worthy, and staunch. I dropped in to tea at the back of the shop. I

cheered up the mother cumbered with much serving, and the daughters with their smiling faces and ready hands were my district visitors, and taught in the Sunday school.

In those happy and hopeful days, the late Mr. J. R. GREEN, since famous as the author of *A Short History of*

82. *the English People*, was my constant companion  
JOHN  
RICHARD  
GREEN. and close friend. He had a sole charge in the neighbouring parish of Hoxton, and for some two years we met almost daily; we were facing the same difficulties, discussing the same doubts, trying to solve the same problems.

But this is no book concerning my clerical life. I hasten to recover the thin golden thread of music, which still con-

tinued, and probably will continue to the end, to  
 83. run through my days, hidden at times in the  
MUSIC AND  
THE MASSES. complex fabric of the general life-work, but never really lost or broken. Thousands around me were leading dull lives of monotonous toil, with little refreshment or variety, too much shut up to the beer-house or the counter, tempted by want and gin, tempted also to all kinds of chicanery and petty theft, and full of sordid aims. I determined to try the effect of music, and good music, upon their narrow, busy, overburdened lives. I invited Mr. C. H. DEACON, SIGNOR REGONDI—incomparable on the guitar and concertina—and SIGNOR PEZZE to come down

and give a concert in the national school-room. The prices of admission were low—1*d.* and 3*d.* The room was crammed; the music was a little over the people's heads; the respectable element predominated a little too much, as I expected, but the class I aimed at was fairly represented. The audience was hushed, attentive, a little awed, but intensely appreciative. I did not play myself. No one had heard me play there, so no one expected me to play then; and I might have lost my character as general manager and president had I contributed to the programme in a musical capacity. I confess the old war-horse within me began to chafe and paw the ground, impatient for action, when the players got well to work. I seemed to feel that my real place was at their side. I had been too lately weaned, but I kept my feelings to myself.

I believe in music as I believe in pictures for the masses. It draws people together, oils the wheels of the social system, and very much facilitates the intercourse between a pastor and his flock. Music is better than penny readings or lectures for this purpose, chiefly because penny readings, as a rule, are so badly and stupidly conducted. For one person who can attract attention by his reading or lecturing there are a dozen who can excite interest among the poorer classes by singing and playing; and professional musicians are, as a rule, very kind and liberal in giving their services if only a fit occasion presents itself.

Tea-meetings, speeches, and lectures were, however, easier

to organize, and I was not long enough at Bethnal Green—hardly two years—to test fairly by their frequency the good of cheap concerts for the people parochially, nor was it my own parish, nor had I entirely my own way. But the experiment has been notoriously successful since, in the shape of coffee music-halls and cheap entertainments for the people. I am convinced that the influence of music over the poor is quite angelic. Music is the hand-maid of religion and the mother of sympathy. The hymns and hymn tunes taken home by the children from church and chapel are blessed outlets of feeling, and full of religious instruction—they humanize households all through the land. The Moody and Sankey tunes have exercised a cheering and even hallowing influence far and wide, in remote Welsh hamlets, from Northumberland to Devonshire, in the crowded dens of our manufacturing centres, and in lonely seaside villages.

Teach the people to sing, and you will make them happy; teach them to listen to sweet sounds, and you will go far to render them harmless to themselves, if not a blessing to their fellows.

Since my ordination I have, with great reluctance, and under considerable pressure from old friends, broken

through my rule of never playing in public.

84. LAST APPEARANCES. Once at St. Peter's, Stepney, where I was curate for a short time, I played at a concert, got up for the edification of the parish, in the school-room.

The people, I think, were too much surprised thoroughly to enjoy me in so completely novel and unexpected a character.

Again, at Saint James the Less, Westminster, at another school-room concert, I played. There I think the feelings of the audience were very mixed. A good many seemed scandalised at a parson playing the fiddle at all. Others were shocked at his performing thus publicly.

When invited by the late lamented MR. SPOTTISWOODE, then President of the Royal Institution, to lecture on "Old Violins" before that learned assembly, I certainly ventured to touch some of the matchless violins lent me on that occasion just sufficiently to illustrate a few points, and demonstrate certain peculiarities of tone. But, although sufficient for the purpose, my hand had lost its cunning, nor shall I ever again play the violin at all to my own liking. Indeed, I keep my Strad. in a cabinet behind glass. There he rests unsounded and unstrung.

Before the end of the century he will probably pass out of my hands. It is well that he should sleep awhile. I have worked him hard enough in my day. About A.D. 1900 he will probably emerge, fresh, powerful, and perhaps sweeter than ever, to tell the unborn generations of the twentieth century how great and magical an artificer was ANTONIUS STRADIVARIUS CREMONENSIS, A.D. 1712.

If these famous old violins did not have these long periods of rest they would soon be all worn out, and A.D. 2000 would

only have them as museum specimens, no longer fit to be played upon. It is the collector who keeps them  
85.  
*IN PACE.* for years unstrung, and the violinists who lay them by and neither play upon them nor lend them about,—who are the real benefactors and conservers of the Cremona gems. This thought often consoles me when I look at the kind and faithful face of my old violin, or take him out to pass my hand at times caressingly over the dear, familiar maple back, polished and all aglow, like transparent sunlit agate and so finely veined. I look at him as he lies mute in my hands—but not dead. Ah ! how he used to sound beneath my bow in the crowded halls and at gay scenes that have faded out for ever with the “days that are no more.” Ay ! and how he shall sound again in other hands, and sing rapturously to other hearts, long after my hand has grown cold and my heart has ceased to beat.

The pulpit had now fairly taken the place of the violin. Of course I wrote my sermons elaborately, so elaborately that after I had written two I did not quite see  
86.  
*NEW DUTIES.* my way to writing a third, for the simple reason that I had exhausted the whole range of Christian teaching, practice as well as doctrine, and there did not seem to me to be any more to say. Necessity, however, is the mother of invention, and I contrived to go on reading sermons at first to an empty church until I felt that something must be done. I had studied audiences in the concert

room. I had never uttered two words in public, but in the Isle of Wight I had been occasionally in the habit of selecting a solitary hillock and addressing the cows in terms of great eloquence on various topics of public interest.

This is not the place to dwell upon my early attempts at extemporary preaching. Suffice it to say that the faculties

87. which make the success of a soloist are tempera-

THE ORATORICAL AND ARTISTIC TEMPERAMENT. mentally at least the same as those required by the actor or the orator. Some intellectual power

and a special cultivation are of course required in addition, and it is quite as possible to be a good speaker without having an ear for music as it is possible to have an ear for music without being a successful soloist; but it is not possible, without the dramatic intuition and sympathetic temperament, to be a good soloist, actor, speaker, or preacher. I found then that the time I had spent in acquiring the art of dominating an audience in the concert-room had not been wholly wasted. An orator is sometimes said to play upon his audience as upon an old fiddle. The simile is not ill chosen. The special vehicle I had learned to control was indeed lost to me in the Church, but the living spirit, the breathing creatures, the beating hearts I had studied how to move, were the same; and although suffering from a certain incoherency of mind and excessive redundancy of language, I did not despair of success in my new sphere. It seemed to me to be one full of

great possibilities. I was more hopeful then, than I am now about Church reform. I thought the clergy *as a class* more intelligent. I thought more of the old theology could be worked up into a new and living organism than I now see to be possible. I was more hopeful about vital Christianity. I believed in welding together classes on the basis of a common and Christ-like humanity; in raising and purifying the working classes by the presentation, if not of a nobler, at all events of a more practical ideal. As time went on, I found the problem more complex and less soluble.

Then, I was more hopeful about my own powers. I thought that steady industry and perseverance would supply my natural defects of brain and fitfulness of temperament, which were very considerable. Happy imperfection of judgment! happy inconsistency of thought! How many endeavours after the Christian life would never have been made did men stop to count the cost or estimate their own weakness! How many good works would never be begun could the inevitable failures be foreseen! Still the impulse of youthful fervour and inexperience which endures as seeing that which is invisible, is never wholly without fruit, and, after all, seems closely akin to the faith that removes mountains. I would not have had my life at the East End without its illusions or its failures. The first have comforted and the last have humbled me, and both have worked together for good by inspiring me to work for the attainable.

When I had been nearly two years in the Church and went west to St. James the Less, Westminster, as curate,

88. there was very little outward trace of my

FIRST LITERARY SUCCESSES. musical life left. One morning I was reminded

that I was still a musician by a letter from the Dean of Canterbury, DEAN ALFORD. He had just become editor of the *Contemporary Review*. He sent me two volumes of MOZART's letters, and asked me for a page or two of notice. With the exception of a little East End sketch called "Amy Arnold," for which I received the modest sum of £2 from a religious Society, this was the first remunerative work that had come the way of my pen. I had got rather disheartened about my writing. The provincial press printed my prose lucubrations, and my poems were often accepted—never paid for. I can see now what shut me out of the magazines. It was the superb magniloquence of my style. "Words! words! words!" they killed me. "Amy Arnold" was a simple, unaffected little narrative, with a touch of pathos stealing over the page like the evening sunlight that fell through the dusty casement upon the bed of the dying girl. That real sketch from life was accepted, and I had begun to feel that until I had something to say it was of no use to trifle with war-paint, or strut about in the borrowed plumes of extravagant imagery and flimsy rhetoric.

So my pen, with the exception of sermon writing, which I was even then fast abandoning in favour of the spoken word, had lain tolerably idle, and when I opened MOZART's

letters with a beating heart, I resolved to wield what had hitherto been but a goose-quill in sober earnest, and to succeed. That article, which is now to be found in the Biographical Section of *Music and Morals*, at once “placed” my literary faculty in the Dean’s estimation. I may say it made my literary fortune.

The sudden change from literary failure to success surprised me a little, but the fact is my whole style had suddenly changed. I still could be magniloquent

89.  
WRITING.

when I chose, but I learned, partly from my pulpit studies and the cultivation of the spoken word, the value of directness and plain speaking, both as a means of expressing thought and winning attention. I began instinctively to choose the short instead of the long words, and then I found that I could bring in the long words and rolling sentences occasionally with all the more crushing effect. Somebody pointed out to me that this habitual temperance and occasional exuberance of language was a leading feature of MILTON’s prose. This encouraged me in chastening my style. I thought I might not be able to imitate MILTON in any other way.

From that day I never have found any difficulty in gaining admission to any magazine that I chose to write for, from the *Quarterly Review* down to the veriest “penny dreadful.” The following week the Dean of Canterbury sent me about twenty volumes of all sorts to review for

the *Contemporary*. Amongst these was MR. HOWELL'S *Venetian Life*.

MR. HOWELL was at that time an unknown writer. It was my happiness to discern him at once on this side of the big pond. I believe my review was the first notice that he got in England. I had not read two pages of his book before I experienced the indescribable sensation of something new, characteristic, and charming. Any man, be he painter, poet, essayist, or musician, who can give us that feeling, that distinct breath of novelty, that odour as of brine from the great ocean and fount of creation, lifts himself at once above the herd. He has the incommunicable touch that cannot be taught; the power of making the ever original and personal soul shine through—not as a reflection, a copy, a parody—a soul like any other soul, but the soul of the soul in *him*, the writer—unlike all the world—with a message for the soul of the soul in *me*, the reader, unlike every other reader, discerned, appealed to, found out. That is the precious and prophetic quality which stamps all best art and literature. It comes from the Alone and goes to the Alone; it is the eternal open secret. "I visit the Royal Academy every year," said ALMA TADEMA to me the other day, "and seek for some picture which will give me a new sensation. I can hardly ever find one. I seek in vain. Endless repetition!" This power of giving utterance to the new belongs

to all genius and places it. Musicians, as well as others, get insensibly classed by this same strength of individuality, which the whole of our modern life in this conventional copy-book world conspires to stifle and stamp out.

BEETHOVEN, SPOHR, SCHUMANN, MENDELSSOHN, CHOPIN, WAGNER—each is new; does not *try* to be new like your charlatans; cannot help it; does naturally, without effort, without knowing it, what was inconceivable to all men the moment before, what has not been done, could never have been done earlier or by anyone else, or at any other time. Then the school is founded and the aroma of novelty passes. Manufacture sets in. Art gets itself machine-made. None think it possible ever again to create or write or paint otherwise. But Genius, that eternal child, comes by flinging garlands wet with dew, and the scales fall once more from our eyes, and lo! a new heaven and a new earth stand revealed, and the old things have passed away and all things have become new, even as every day is new, born out of the infinite sunlight to fade again into the “azure of the All,” whilst “God fulfils Himself in many ways.”

Under the Dean of Canterbury’s editorial encouragement I wrote essay after essay in rapid succession for the *Contemporary Review*, not always but frequently on

1871. They were in no sense written to order; several of them had been in my mind for years. At Freshwater, Isle of Wight, during many a lonely ramble, I grappled ineffectually with the problem of musical sound, and the reason why it acted so directly and powerfully upon the life of emotion. In Italy, at Florence, pacing the Cascine by the Arno beneath a network of emerald foliage in spring—in my gondola on the shores of the Lido off Venice—in the southern vineyards at Naples, when all the grapes were gathered and the trailing vines hung yellow and scarlet—in the fig gardens of Genoa, and amid the perfumed orange-groves of the Riviera, all hung with golden fruit yet still breathing with flowers, the same problem haunted me, when at last it seemed to flash suddenly and satisfactorily upon me that Sound was the sovereign art-vehicle of Emotion, because it possessed *itself* all the properties of emotion, viz., elation, depression, velocity, &c. Everyone said, how simple! Of course; and yet I am not aware that it had occurred to anyone to point this out before, though many have quietly assumed it since.

These ideas, I say, had long been maturing in my mind, and when I took up my pen in England I established this position in the first part of my book with intense pleasure, and I may say that the whole of *Music and Morals* was written out of a full heart and brain, in which many thoughts had been stored for years without ever having found a congenial outlet in any literary form.

I should in all probability not have thought of issuing, in its present form, a companion volume of collected essays

92. ranging over about twelve years (1871–83), had  
WHY I PRINT  
MY MUSICAL  
LIFE.

not various reprints in America, and translations into French and German, warned me that others were not slow to reap where I had strawn. In republishing these pieces, however, I have decided to take the wind out of the pirates' sails, as far as I could, by giving my work a sort of autobiographical setting which none of the pirates could possibly supply. I intend, then, to string my separate beads upon the thread of my own life, in some places supplying certain links of thought which may tend to give my essays a unity of purpose and sustained interest, which they might not otherwise possess.

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NOTE.—Anent my old friend VENUA; as this is passing through the press there comes to me news that he died and is buried at Cambridge. The inscription on his tombstone runs thus :—

Dieu lui fasse paix.  
Monsieur

Jean Guillaume Robert Réné Venua,  
An accomplished musician.

Born in Paris 1787.

Departed this life,  
4th December 1868,

Aged 81.

“I know that my Redeemer liveth.”

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Second Book.

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BY THE GOLDEN SEA.





## Second Book.

### BY THE GOLDEN SEA.

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#### I.

#### INTERLUDE

##### ON RECURRENT IDEAS.

**F**REDERICK DENISON MAURICE once said, "People sometimes tell me that I repeat myself—they apparently wish to hear something new every time they come to my church, or read a new book of mine—but," he added, "I never professed to teach or write new things—I never had but one or two things that I was anxious to say—and I have been saying them over and over again for thirty years." Everyone has not the courage to speak like this; but all teaching that is not merely heterogeneous and eclectic (a

93.  
A SENTENCE  
BY MAURICE.

sort of teaching, by the way, for which MAURICE had a deep contempt) deals with a few master thoughts—what WAGNER would call “Leitmotive.” Evolution rules DARWIN. An intense faith in the moral and Spiritual Constitution of the world rules TENNYSON. A reverent Pessimism pervades the works of GEORGE ELIOT, an equally reverent Optimism characterises EMERSON. When the ferment of creative and imaginative sensibility subsides, all thoughtful minds have a tendency to settle into grooves marked out by idiosyncrasy, temperament, quality of brain tissue, heredity, and sometimes social environment.

No class of writers better illustrate this than historians. HALLAM is impersonal; JOHN RICHARD GREEN, personal; one will construe history, like BUCKLE, through the colourless lens of inexorable and pitiless law, and see historical movements making men; another, like CARLYLE, will let the human element count for much, and see men making historical movements; whilst a third, like MACAULAY, will recognise the personal and impersonal power in history, and warp both a little with party politics.

Those who expect to take up *My Musical Life* and find in it nothing but novelty, may be disappointed to light upon more than once something which recalls *Music and Morals*; yet all I have ever aspired to is to “sing to one clear harp in divers tones,” the few clear and strong and

sweet and happy things that have been revealed to me through music.

My thoughts on music are recurrent thoughts. The same beam of light rests upon many a ripple. But thoughts will sometimes bear re-statement. When a thought is new it is often a little confused, yet is there a certain force and radiance in the very confusion. The haze of sunrise—the “wild freshness of morning”—is at once the first and the last memory that abides with us. The old man forgets the crowded and dusty thoroughfares of middle life and babbles of green fields.

The two thoughts which lie at the root of all my musical as of all my religious thinking are: 1st. THE TREMENDOUS

95.  
ROOT THOUGHTS. EMPIRE OF THE SENSES, by which I mean the spell of the beautiful world without us, its colour, light, loveliness, its gracious, radiant, and tender women; its happy innocent children; its generous, ingenuous, and indomitable men; its tragedies and comedies; “all the wealth and all the woe”; its hints of an imperishable universe, ‘unseen though felt, o’ershadowing us’; its silent finger pointing to the sky; all this I view with ‘reverence and good heed,’ and without satiety. Life to me is from quite an external point of view, with all its sin and sorrow, infinitely worth living.

Never to lose the eager spirit; to keep the heart eternally

young ; to stand always at the open gates of Paradise ; to listen to 'the lordly music flowing from the illimitable years !' This is my desire. But 'tis a world of time, and of things seen and temporal, after all—*altiora peto*.

So that other thought is never long absent. THE IMMENSE SUPREMACY OF THE SOUL ! In darkness and tears, in pain and loss, in the failure of hope, in the shame of remorse, when all things in heaven and earth seem unstable—I am aware of a secret life, a consciousness independent of time and chance. This revives my spirit ; this soothes me with a sense of the infinite.

. . . . .  
Alone, with closed eyes, the royal visions pass. Angelic faces are with me in the twilight, voices that cannot be heard, touches that cannot be felt, and suddenly a summer land within breaks forth when all is dark without. I perceive that man does not live by bread alone. The outer world is the dream, the inner life is the reality. I carry it everywhere with me. I thought the visible universe was all in all. I perceive it to be as nothing in comparison with the soul that sits enthroned above it. It is *that* which makes the poor man royal and beggars the king. What wealth have you within, not what will men and women give you ; *what*, not *where*, are you. Does not each one carry within himself the riches and the poverty of a world ? and is there not a life within a life ? This is THE SOLITARY SUPREMACY OF THE SOUL.

Musical sound fascinated me early as the refined physical medium on the very border-land of spirit, which, when directly excited, dealt with and controlled the springs of this mysterious inner life of feeling—this region of emotion which gives the spirit its solitary supremacy, and colours or discolours at will all the objects of sense. The Editor of the *Quarterly Review* invited me to explain my

96. views upon the subject. I repeated in a succinct

A form what I had said in my book, *Music and RETROSPECT. Morals*. The London Institution asked me to

lecture on the same subject. I had by this time completely possessed my thought and I became aware of my increased facility in handling it. With the aid of a piece of chalk and a black-board I there attempted to convey to a mixed audience what at one time I should have despaired of expressing without the aid of musical sound or elaborate diagrams. The *Quarterly* article (vol. 131, No. xxxvi) I do not intend to reprint; but the words I spoke at Finsbury Circus, although going over some ground familiar to the readers of my first volume, seem to me to resume briefly my Recurrent Thoughts on the Rationale of Music, and its place amongst the Arts, and will, I think, be found acceptable as an introduction to the meditations contained in Book II. of this volume.

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## II.

## THE RATIONALE OF MUSIC.

To discuss music without the aid of instruments, notes, or diagrams, is not an easy and would be an impossible thing,

97. were I mainly dealing with its science, history,  
THE ETERNAL or performance. But it is with the general  
WHY?

philosophy and *rationale* of the art that I am now concerned. Music has come in for its full share of science, history, and criticism ; but how few have dived into its essence, and instead of seeking for the inevitable “how,” asked after the eternal “why” !

I have always held that music should be discussed and written about just like any other art. The musical criticisms

98. of the day deal chiefly in technicality and per-  
HOW TO DIS- sonality, and it is rather unfortunate that the few  
CUSS MUSIC. writers who occasionally venture out into the

deep, and discourse on music *per se*, are deficient in the one thing needful—“musical perception”; in that ocean they cannot swim, and the sooner some of them get to shore the better. Music has its Morals, its right and its wrong, its high and its low, like any other art ; and until people can be got to understand how this *can* be, and why it *must* be, music will never assert its dignity among the arts and receive its dues. Before MR. RUSKIN wrote, people thought

that there was no right or wrong about painting, sculpture, and architecture, and musical criticism has been in the same Slough of Despond. And what is the consequence? Painting and sculpture rank above music, yet music, not painting, not sculpture, is *the* modern art. Who shall be found to do for the new art of music what MR. RUSKIN has done for painting and architecture—to create for it a moral philosophy as well as a *rationale*? I need not say that in *Music and Morals* I have tried to show how this might be done, and I have been much gratified to observe that writers who are apt to treat my opinions as common, when not wrong, and as wrong when not common, have not always been deterred from the not uncommon practice of appropriating them without acknowledgment.

I now glance briefly: I. At the development of music out of the rough elements of sound:

II. At its place amongst the sister arts and its peculiar functions.

III. At the obvious nature of its influence.

Music, its origin, function, and influence—that is my subject.

We now enter at once into the world of mystery and

99. imagination: of mystery because, though you

ROUGH  
ELEMENTS  
OF SOUND. know how a sound can be produced, you do not know why it produces its effect on you; of imagination, since I must ask you to recall as you read, by

way of illustration, the most beautiful sounds you have ever heard. But sounds of less agreeable nature have first to be realised. Before we enter the temple of music or penetrate its inner shrine, we find ourselves distracted with the rough elements of sound, the rabble of noise outside—how out of such elements shall we ever collect the “choirs that chime after the chiming of the eternal spheres”?

We have Sound in the world around us of every conceivable kind. Listen to the distant roar of a great populous city. Its cry goes up by day and night. Myriad voices ascend from sea and land. If you notice the waves as they drag down the shingles on the beach, in their retiring scream they give forth a series of semitones ; and there is a rough and elemental sort of musical sound in the moaning of the wind, which has supplied poets with allusions more sentimental than accurate ; still the wind’s harp does go up and down, like the mooing of a cow. And doubtless the rough inflexions of the human voice existed long before music became an art. As the voice rises and falls you have a scale of emotional inflexion which gives it full force ; for it is the sound quite as much as the words used which yields the impression of what is passing in your mind. But even here we have not arrived at musical sound, we have only touched some materials of it. How shall we get at musical sound ? Or, in other words, what is the difference between a Noise and a musical Note ? A noise is only understood when the nature of a musical note is understood. Roughly

speaking, a musical note means a “clang,” to use HELMHOLTZ’s word, in which there is one fundamental tone, and along with it the third, fifth, and octave as buried tones. When the fundamental is strong, and the hidden tones, the third, fifth, and octave, &c., very faint, you get the impression of one musical note which is invariably the fundamental tone. There are many hidden mysteries in a fundamental tone, a greater or less variety of overtones, varying according to your sound-quality. I have had occasion to dwell more scientifically upon this in my chapter on “Bells.”

Now, what makes noise as opposed to a musical note is just this. You get the third, fifth, and the octave, or

some other overtones, louder than the funda-

100. NOISE. mental note. To illustrate this summarily, we

might compare the notes of a violin or a fine bell with a Chinese gong; or you may strike a coal-scuttle, or a warming-pan, and produce an equally satisfactory result. A gong is, however, perhaps the best type of noise—I do not allude to those smooth Japanese metal plates, or bars, which often give one or more very sweet tones, but those horrible gongs, dented all over, that you thump with a drum-stick, beginning *pp.* and ending with a purgatorial crescendo in *ff.* This, I say, is noise, and most of the sounds which fall upon the ear are noise, especially what we hear “whene’er we take our walks abroad” in the streets of London.

When, then, we have found a clear fundamental tone, with its accompanying fainter overtones, we have found a musical note. Now analyze this musical note.

101.

MUSICAL TONE. It can vary in three ways, and in three ways only. When you know how it so varies you know all that can be known about it. A musical note, then, can vary in pitch, in intensity, and in quality or *timbre*.

1. What makes the pitch of a note? It depends upon the rapidity of the vibrations. Supposing you take as an illustration the sound given by a note of an harmonium, which is caused by the vibration of a metal tongue. When this tongue vibrates slowly, or only a few times backwards and forwards in a second, you get a note of a deep pitch; but when it vibrates at the rate of 67,000 vibrations to the note, the pitch is so shrill that although some cats may hear it, no human beings can. The ear of the cat is finer than ours. Cats and some birds are microphones compared to man; they see sights we cannot see, they smell smells we very fortunately cannot smell, and they hear sounds which we cannot hear. A note is high or low in pitch, according as the number of vibrations which produce it are in a given time few or many, fast or slow.

2. What makes its intensity? It is the length of the vibration waves that determines their loudness or intensity. If the wave or the extent of "excursion" of the vibrating molecules be large, the shape of the wave being the same

the sound is loud; if the reverse, the shape being the same, the sound is faint.

3. What determines the quality? The quality depends on the *mode* of vibration. It is, as HELMHOLTZ has shown, the number, order, and intensity of the vibrations of the overtones in a “clang” which determines timbre or quality, and which makes the differences between the same note sounded on a violin, piano, harp, flute, &c.

But even now we have only arrived at the composition of musical notes, not at the composition of music. How then

102. did music arise? Of course the human ear has  
BIRTH OF always been open to sweet and disagreeable  
MUSIC. sounds, and has gradually been led to choose between them. I do not want to quarrel with the mythical notion that some pristine man or woman, wandering on the sea-shore, may have found a shell with seaweed stretched like strings across it, out of which the wind was making an *Æolian* harp, and that so the first idea of the harp may have arisen. This may have happened, for aught we know. The creating of artificial notes for mere pleasure seems to have been a custom from time immemorial.

Bones of extinct mammals have been found made into flutes. At least M. Lartet says so. What he found looked like a flute to him, and far be it from me to bring art into collision with science by saying it does not look like a flute. I think, on the whole, it does; and, if so, this may

be another proof that primitive man delighted in sweet sounds. But we are still far from the art of music. Here are witnesses to an ancient impulse in the direction of an art, but not the art itself.

We may as well skip Egypt and Assyria, and assume that the musical survival of the fittest remained, after the extinction of those empires,—with Greece. However, we need not pause long even in Greece; for, although the Greeks had many modes or scales, as they never discovered the natural advantages of the octave completed by the eighth note, their musical art could not progress.

It is useless for pedants to prose about the emotional advantages and special musical character of the Dorian, Lydian, or Phrygian modes—as if we had lost, or could lose, anything by adopting our system of fixed tonality; for once get *that* and you can obviously write in any mode, and give your key any special character you like; and the proof of this is that BERLIOZ has used the proud Hypodorian mode in the second part of “Christ’s Infancy.” SAINT-SAENS opens the “Noës de Prométhée” with it. GOUNOD uses it in *Faust* for the “Roi de Thule.” The Hypophrygian mode colours the close of *William Tell*, act ii. (ROSSINI); and we might multiply instances—but the Greeks could never have written *Faust* or *William Tell*, as will presently appear.

The fact is, that in Greece musical sound was auxiliary to the exercise of the dance, the ceremony of the feast, the

discipline of the arena, or the voice of the orator ; it accompanied chanting, and most people are agreed that harmony, in our sense of the word, was at that time unknown. The Greek system, like some others in the realms of theology, philosophy, and science, was elaborate but sterile, and so Greece handed her traditions on to Rome, and still no progress was made, because music, like all other arts, had to bide her time. Her Muse is essentially the dear possession of the modern world ; she lives and moves and finds free development and expansion in our atmosphere alone ; and this is what makes her so absorbing and fascinating, and *entitles* her, now that she has reached her glorious maturity, to rank above the other arts. I say that Music is essentially the Modern Art, although her mystic treasures lay buried for centuries in the womb of Time.

So all things have their supreme moment ; so electricity slept in the amber, and was known to the Greek six hundred years before Christ, but was only wedded to applied science in the laboratory of the nineteenth century. Every ancient who boiled a kettle must have observed the rush of steam from its spout, but it remained for Watt and Stephenson to adapt it to commerce, manufacture, and transport. And all arts have fared the same. Like spirits in the vasty deep, they wait for their special call. That call is always the same. *It is the deep need of an Age.*

What need has human life of art ? What is art ? Art

is, like Sensation, one and indivisible in its essence; but,

103. like Sensation, it is manifold in its channels of expression. It captures in different forms and the imperative mood runs through the five senses. Expression is the imperative mood of our nature: without it we wither and pine; with it we grow, we develop, we soar. Man is essentially a dramatic animal: he is ever seeking to make known what is in him; he aspires to the true possession of himself. Life becomes more rich when it passes into word and action. Every moment in proportion as we are truly alive we are longing to manifest ourselves as we can. We are not satisfied till someone else enjoys what we enjoy, knows what we know, feels what we feel, and the great burden-lifters of humanity are those who have told us the things we knew already, but which we could not express for ourselves. These are "the souls that have made our souls wiser." These are the prophets and the poets and the artists, dear, kindred, world-embracing spirits that give humanity back to itself, and make it doubly worth having by bestowing upon it those memorable and entrancing gifts of expression that "on the stretched fore-finger of Time sparkle for ever."

And do you not feel this as you stand before any great work of art—the "Madonna di San Sisto," at  
104. Dresden, the "Transfiguration" at Rome? Do  
ART RELIEVES FEELING. you not feel—"Here is one who has painted my

inexpressible thoughts—here before me are the Divine figures I have seen in my dreams”? When you hear the *Elijah* do you not stand in the cleft of the rock with the prophet, and veil your face as the whirlwind sweeps by, and amid the crash of the thunder and rending of the rocks, you perceive that the Lord is not in the tempest, nor in the earthquake, nor in the fire, but at last in the still small voice? And upon you has not this had a great and hallowing effect? Has not music taken your own turbulent emotions, and expressed them for you in the storm, leaving you sublimely elevated and yet sublimely calm at the close? Such will indeed appear to be the special function of musical art. But I must not anticipate.

I said each art has to bide its time. When a man appears before his time he has to stand down, and another takes up his message later on. And so it is

105.

THE DAY AND with art. There is affinity between an Age and THE HOUR. an Art; let music come up before its time, another art, Sculpture, will elbow it out, and each growth will be rapid in due season, like that of seeds. Sculpture, Architecture, Painting, Music, all follow the same law. Look at sculpture in Greece from AGELADES and PHIDIAS to PRAXITELES and LYSIPPUS, a brief one hundred and fifty years—the art reached its culmination, then dropped, like a flower shedding its petals, throughout the Isles of Greece. It was the same with the Greek drama, with Gothic Architec-

ture in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, with Italian painting in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries ; and Music, from HANDEL to WAGNER, is following a similar course ; for I think the future history of Music must be in its combination with the other arts, and its adaptation in higher complexity to the ever-restless needs of human emotion.

Now observe the grand fundamental law of art succession. Each art comes as the angelic response to some cry of deep

106. developmental need, and it embodies the ideal  
RISE,  
PROGRESS,  
AND DECAY. tendencies of a whole epoch. Thus, Sculpture was the art of the Greeks because they knew nothing higher than the beauty and symmetry of the human body ; that was the climax of their adoring souls, and it came forth in the beautiful, graceful, and sublime forms of Venus, Apollo, and Jove. We pass over Roman art, for that was either done by Greeks in Rome or was simply a pale, too often a mechanical, development of Greek art. We also pass over the early Christian art, for the early Christians looked askance at art, and yet were subdued by it, for they were forced at last to weave the heathen symbols—legends of Maia and Orpheus—into their sepulchral frescoes. We come later on to the extinction of almost all sensibility in art, through Byzantine forms—in fact, to the year 814, the time of CHARLEMAGNE—a time when the people of Europe were so busily engaged in slaughtering one another that, of course, there was little to be expected in the

way of art, which requires for its elaboration a certain amount of peace and leisure.

But the great human needs are ever silently developing, and by-and-by another art arose, that of Gothic Architecture. This became a grand medium for expressing the new thoughts and feelings of the people, the awe, the worship, the grandeur, and, above all, the human interests of the new Christianity now spreading rapidly, like some fertile and invincible creeper, over the ruined fragments of the prostrate Roman columns—the foundation-stones of the modern world. MR. RUSKIN has told us how the old monks built their very lives, and along with them the hearts of the people, into those noble cathedrals which are dotted over all Christian lands, and remain the pride and boast of the civilized world. He has made us feel how the recluse must have revelled in his cell as he gazed upon the stone which he was ready to carve, or intrust to the itinerant mason; how he paced his cloister and dreamed of the execution of those ideas which he had perhaps long cherished, until by degrees his imagination moulded the very life of the period, its activity, its coarseness, its humour, as well as its devotion, into sculptured capital and gargoyle.

The efflorescent and flamboyant wildness of design marked at length the extreme limits of the stone art. The too fitful, fanciful impatience or despair succeeded loss of healthy perception, loss of interest, of reason, of law, and Gothic architecture became worse than dead—degraded. But the stone

art only fell when its powers as an expressional medium were exhausted.

Art now turned the stonemason's chisel into the painter's brush ; rapidly through the schools of Venice, Florence, and Rome, were the foundations of the art laid, the discovery of perspective, anatomy, and colour. The noble edifice rose from Giotto to Raphael only to exhaust in its turn, and in a comparatively short time, the new, more plastic, more pathetic vehicle of colour, and turn restlessly to seek and to find another medium.

What was that other latest-born minister of expression, eager to seize the torch as it fell from the painter's trem-

bling hands. It was Music. She offered herself

107. <sup>MUSIC</sup> <sub>LATEST BORN.</sub> a new emotional medium fitted to express what neither Sculpture, Architecture, nor Painting could express, the mystic and complex emotions of that hidden life made up of self-analysis, sensibility, love, prayer, trance, vision, ecstasy, which Christianity brought into the world, and which gave to the human soul that inner and intense quality of spiritual independence which must henceforth stamp and qualify all human progress. It is impossible to deny that more secular elements entered into the formation of the modern spirit, although its inwardness was its chief characteristic.

Great geographical discoveries, New Worlds, Australia America, and the remote East ; great commercial activities,

great inventions, the printing press, steam navigation, and the electric telegraph; great religious movements, great revolutions, the rise of the English Reformation, the translation of the Bible; many things combined to produce the unparalleled activity of the modern spirit. But amongst all these factors Christianity was paramount; it explored and sifted emotion as it had never been explored and sifted before; it set free the springs of the inner life, and taught men the sublime secret of an independent emotional consciousness, before which the outer world vanished into space, whilst the changes, the rise and fall, and subtle sequences of mental states became the only realities.

But the hunger of art could not long be evaded. These very states called aloud for expression; they were elaborated

108. in the silence of the cloister, and it was thence

SECRET OF that music stept forth into the world, as the new  
MUSIC. art medium.

Now, as I have elsewhere pointed out at some length, music possesses two qualities *combined* by no other art: first, the quality of velocity—it *moves*; and secondly, the quality of direct appeal—it stirs feelings without having recourse to ideas or images. The drama, indeed, has movement, but it only stirs emotion through ideas; painting stirs us by the ideas presented and the direct emotional impact of colour, but it has no *velocity*; that has to be supplied by imagination. You may ally music with anything you please, but it alone can deal

first-hand with emotion, arouse it, control it, direct it, and follow its chameleon life through all its innumerable windings.

This, the secret of music, once stated, is stated for ever; it is revealed in two words, *Directness* and *Velocity*.

And now, having shown the place of music amongst the arts, I should naturally proceed to trace the history of

109. Modern Music through what MR. HULLAH has  
PERIODS OF MODERN MUSIC. termed its three periods. We must be satisfied here with but one glimpse. First period, A.D. 370 to 1400. AMBROSE (374) selected certain of the Greek modes for chants. GREGORY (590) revived the forgotten work of the good Milanese bishop, and added four new scales. Then came HUCHBALD of Tournay (932), who introduced a sort of harmony which must have resembled the mixture stop of the organ. GUIDO (1020) of Arezzo, and FRANCO of Cologne (1200), who between them divide the honours of descant, *cantus mensurabilis*, or division into bars, and flats and sharps, together with the invention of the monochord.

In the second period, 1400 to 1600, we have JOSQUIN DES PRES in Belgium, and PALESTRINA in Italy, and the rise of a true system of tonality; and when we enter the third period, 1600 to 1750, we have reached the true octave; the major and minor scale in which we find the uniform arrangement of semitones and the perfect cadence, ascribed by some to

MONTE VERDE 1590. When this moment arrived, the basis of a sound musical development was reached, and modern music then first became possible. The science of the cloister had at last stepped forth to wed, to train and discipline the wild, untutored art of the world outside.

Rapid and sudden, like the burst of Greek sculpture or Italian painting, was the rise and progress of modern music, the instant the science of the Church touched the heart of the World.

CARISSIMI died 1672; he was the type of the transition period. He might have seen PALESTRINA, and he lived to hear CORELLI. In CORELLI's life-time the germ of every style of music since known arose. He witnessed the singing schools of Naples in the south, the rise of the great violin schools in the north, the foundation of the oratorio in Rome, the progress of instrumental music throughout Italy, France, and England. All this took place in the last century, and we are struck with a certain awe when we remember that men are still (1883) alive who may have listened to MOZART (died 1791), and conversed with the venerable HAYDN (died 1808). (See *Music and Morals.*)

I return from this by no means irrelevant digression to illustrate the functions by completing the analysis  
110. of music, *as the direct language of the emotions.*  
MUSIC AND EMOTION. Have you ever analysed your thoughts and feelings? Some say it is an unhealthy practice, but that quite

depends; and if it is used for a legitimate purpose, it is interesting to observe what is going on in the realm of emotion. Every moment is occupied by some feeling—good, bad, or indifferent. You are very seldom neutral, and when you are, it is worthy of being noted as a fixed point from which to measure the “excusional” extent of your emotion.

If I now repeat my analysis of the properties of emotion, and then refer it to those of sound, as manipulated by music, we shall find that precisely the same qualities which exist *inwardly* in emotion, exist *outwardly* in sound. And that is the reason why music is fitted to be, and is recognised as, the language of emotion. I pointed this out in *Music and Morals*, and when it was pointed out it seemed very simple.

Emotion, then, consists first of *elation* and *depression*; that is, it goes up and down like a wavy line. When

111.  
NEW  
ILLUSTRATIONS.

a lecturer addresses an audience, the interest may go down lower and lower; then, perhaps, he says something which tickles the fancy, and the emotion goes up and up, his hearers' hopes are raised, and they say to themselves, “Oh, it's not going to be so dull, after all.” Here, then, is an instance of depression followed by elation.

The next quality is *intensity*. Your emotion varies in intensity. You grow intense and earnest as you listen

to a speaker who interests you, until perhaps you are quite, as you say, carried away, or entranced by his eloquence.

Then your emotion has *variety*. We may illustrate this. A man is sitting on a foggy day in his parlour, when a friend suddenly drops in. He is glad to see him, and out of depression he begins to rise into elation. And then comes a story of the hunting field, a well-known wall had to be cleared, and someone was thrown ; and as he listens with more and more interest, he finds the climax to be that the narrator himself was the man who was thrown, and that he has come on this depressing day to see him partly on that account. Then other friends drop in, and you ring for cigars and wine. You are informed there are no cigars, and your emotion is now divided by the story, the cigars, the servant, and your friends ; you are the subject of a great variety of simultaneous emotions, some not over-pleasurable, but, at any rate, there is variety.

Then, fourthly, emotion has a *kind of form*—you may give it an arbitrary form ; you can represent its direction by lines curved according to elation or depression, thick or thin according to intensity, and you can bracket them together to show that they are simultaneous. (Vide *Music and Morals.*)

Lastly, emotion possesses *velocity* ; it travels, and it is never quite at rest ; you may call its velocity *x*.

Now pass to musical sound. The notes in a musical scale

go up and down; they have *elation* and *depression*, may vary in loudness from *pp.* to *ff.*, from *crescendo* to *diminuendo*, and so they have *intensities*. Many lines of melody and harmony can be carried on simultaneously, as in a part song or a score of Wagner's; there is then no mistake about *variety*. Then music has *form*. Musical form is as much a recognised musical phrase as "nicely-felt colour" is in painting, and it is more to the point, for we have but to cast our eyes over a score of SPOHR or BEETHOVEN, and compare it with one of HANDEL's, to see how widely different is the general form even to the eye. Lastly, from *adagio* to *presto* you have reached in music that crowning property of emotion, *velocity*, for music is never at rest.

Side by side, then, we place, after five-fold analysis, emotion and music, the thing to be *expressed* and the thing which *expresses* it. In passing from one to the other we have simply exchanged certain arbitrary lines and an *x* for a set of symbols capable of bringing the various properties of emotion into connection with sound. That set of symbols, so long in arriving, so glorious in its advent, is obviously modern Musical Notation, and in wedding that to sound we have reached at last the sovereign and direct medium of emotional expression in THE ART OF MODERN MUSIC.

And now if it be asked, "What is the use of music?"

I may ask in return, "What is the use of emotion?"

112.  
USB OF  
MUSIC.

It colours all life, it inspires all words, it nerves for all action. What would your life be without it? And what is the grandest thought without it? You know you may repeat a grand passage of SHAKESPEARE without emotion. The noblest passages in the Bible are often read aloud without kindling a thrill or quickening a pulse. But apply the heat of noble dramatic action or impassioned religious eloquence, and how changed is the leaden atmosphere! how living and pregnant is the thought! Music expresses no thoughts, stands for no ideas or intellectual conceptions, rouses (except by association) no images; but it stands for independent states of consciousness, it creates the atmosphere in which thoughts are born, it deals with the mystic states in which thought is steeped and coloured.

Without emotion thought would perish, or remain passive and inert. No age, no sentient creature has been quite without a sense of musical sound as the language of emotion. In its rude elements even dumb animals are affected by it. It influences dogs, horses, and cattle generally. Notice how a musical sound, though monotonous, is understood and obeyed, and how the jingle of bells notoriously encourages horses to perform their work. The plough-boy is inspirited by the strains of his own whistling. And do you wonder that the Spartans were enabled to march to victory inspired by the lays of the minstrel TYRTÆUS—that our soldiers

require the fife and drum? And I have been told a thing at which I have much wondered, that there are people in the North who are very delighted and cheered by that monotonous instrument of torture, the Scotch bagpipe.

I must not trust myself to dwell upon the religious functions of music—active, as in the Lutheran hymn, sung *by*

113. the people; passive, as in the mass or Catholic

SONGS OF anthem, sung *for* the people. The songs of the  
THE TEMPLE. temple have had more attention paid them than the songs of the street; but the time will come when these, too, will be understood as important factors in the life and morality of the people.

A great statesman has said, “Let me make the songs of the people, and let who will make their laws.” And when

we think what might be the influence of music

114. SONGS OF we cannot but regret that the popular songs of  
THE STREET. England are, in fact, represented by “Tommy,

make room for your uncle.” The songs of our music halls kindle emotions truly, but of what kind are they? When you employ music, wed it to thought, and thus awaken emotions, you must remember you are playing with two-edged tools, for the emotions kindled and directed may be such as it is unhealthy and mischievous to cherish. Emotion means fire, and a heap of live coals on your carpet and in your grate subserve very different purposes;

for in the one case your house is warmed, and in the other case it is burned down. So it is with music, which kindles and directs emotion. Music under certain conditions elevates, while under certain other conditions it demoralises. Music ought to be used discreetly, advisedly, and soberly, and that is why the particular *kind* of music we adopt, and the words to which music is set, should be very carefully considered.

Music is not intended simply to tickle the ear; music means Morals. And here let me remind you that not

115. half enough has been said of the discipline of  
**MUSIC MEANS MORALS.** emotion, a function exercised in the highest

degree by music. Upon this very quality of discipline, nobility, and truth of emotional expression, turns the distinction between the modern German and the modern Italian schools, as schools. I say modern Italian, because the old Church schools of Pergolese and Stradella were severe, beautiful, and sublime compared to the modern Italian opera and romance. Yet must we not deny the splendid melodic and even harmonic qualities which are to be found in the essentially false form and spirit of the Italian opera. It has been too much the fashion of the English Wagnerites to decry Italian music; but the German Wagnerite is more liberal and catholic in his appreciation, while WAGNER himself was the most liberal and truly catholic musician of them all. He could appreciate

every kind of music, and so can those who interpret him best.

I remember, when I was at Nuremberg, falling in with RICHTER, then conductor of the Bayreuth Festival. We were

116. seated in the parlour of a little old-fashioned  
RICHTER ON German inn, discussing the various schools of  
BELLINI. music, when I happened to allude to a famous quartet in VERDI's *Rigoletto*, and to BELLINI's *Norma*, whereupon RICHTER, the great Wagner disciple—RICHTER, the conductor of the Bayreuth Festival, the incarnation of the music of the future, sprang up, and lifting high his glass, in honour of the great Italian, exclaimed, "Ach, der Bellini—ist ein ganz colossaler Kerl!"

To resume. The secret of a good school of music is, that it is a real exponent and a sound discipliner of the

117. emotions. Listening to a symphony or sonata  
REFINING of BEETHOVEN's is not a joke: it is a study,  
DISCIPLINE. an emotional training. You sit down and listen attentively, and the master leads you through various moods; he elates you and depresses you; your feeling waxes and wanes with various intensities, not spasmodically, but by coherent sequences. You are put through a whole system of feeling, not of your own choosing; you are not allowed to choose, you are to control yourself here and expand there; and at last, after due exercise, you are

landed on the composer's own platform, disciplined, refreshed, and elevated. Although urged here and there, the light rein has been upon you, and the master drives you much in the same way that a skilled charioteer drives a spirited steed.

This is the process of all really great music, and the reason why the Italian, as a school, and, indeed, *all* bad music, Italian or otherwise, is injurious is because it deals *unfairly* or untruly with your emotions. It does not give you a balanced, rational, or healthful sequence of feeling. It is like a picture the effect of which is spoilt by a washy background of raw colour, or like a melodrama such as *The Bells*, which, without any reflection on MR. IRVING's fine acting, we may, however, call a very good melodrama, but of a bad art sort. It is unlike a play of SHAKESPEARE's. If he has horrors to bring before you, he prepares you for them ; you are not trifled with and exhausted, your emotions are not whipped and spurred until they almost cease to respond. All bad art trifles with, exhausts, and enervates you ; and music most of all, because it deals at first hand with the emotions.

I look for a great popular development of musical art in  
118. England. You know very well that "the English  
AN ENGLISH  
SCHOOL OF  
MUSIC. are not a musical people." They may cultivate  
music, they like it and pay for it, but they do not produce anything to be compared with the works of the

great masters on the Continent. The national music is about "Champagne Charley," "Tommy," "Waking the Baby," "Grandfather's Clock," and "Over the Garden Wall." It is true we have SIR ARTHUR SULLIVAN, whose compositions are always welcome; but he studied in Germany, he took the Mendelssohn scholarship at Leipsic, and therefore he may be considered, so far as music is concerned, a German to the backbone; it can scarcely be said of him, from a musical point of view, that, "in spite of all temptations to belong to other nations, he remained an Englishman."

But in the last forty years the progress of music in England has been very great. MR. HULLAH told me that when he began to examine schools he found children who could not sing two or three consecutive notes in tune; but that now, very greatly through MR. HULLAH's own work, this state of things is altered, and he says that if you go through the length and breadth of the land, you will find that the national ear has been to a great extent cultivated. But we must not stop here; the national art must be improved, and then the national taste, and, above all, the education of the nation, as a whole, in music.

I should like to see someone who should be responsible  
119. for conducting the musical performances of our  
**BOARD** **SCHOOL** **MUSIC.** children. Nothing is more striking in our Board Schools than the admirable management of every other department of instruction, and the muddle,

looseness, uncertainty, and general inefficiency of the musical instruction. Sound, popular music, songs, and part singing, at sight as well as by ear, should radiate from the Board Schools. I desire to see cheap sheets of music placed in the hands of the children, which they may take to their homes, and so learn the art of singing part songs, as they do in Amsterdam, and, indeed, in Holland generally. Even in Switzerland there is a certain coherent musical part “yodelling,” at any rate superior to the “He’s a jolly good fellow” style of chorus affected at our own convivial assemblies.

Let the heaven-born art of music spread ; let it bless the homes and hearths of the people ; let the children sing, and sing together ; let the concertina, the violin, or the flute be found in every cottage ; let not the only fiddle in the place be hung up in the beer-shop, the only choruses in the village be heard in the choir and at the public-house. And while music refines pleasure, let it stimulate work. Let part songs and sweet melody rise in all our crowded factories above the whirl of wheels and clanking of machinery ; thus let the factory girl forget her toil and the artisan his grievance, and Music, the Civiliser, the Recreator, the Soother and Purifier of the emotions, shall become the music of the future for England.

## III.

INTERLUDE  
ON SENSE CHANNELS.

THE soul is one, simple, indivisible. The senses are five, through these the inward and spiritual converses with the outward and visible. In some higher state,

120.  
UNITY OF SENSE.

GOETHE imagined we might perceive, without having recourse to these five ministers ; to be in each other's presence might suffice to place souls in perfect and intimate communion, without speech, or touch, or sight, or sound. When dealing with one sense, I am aware of limitation and imperfection ; it gives me what it can of perception—and no more. I must eke out its message by another—to complete sight I must resort to touch ; but I soon find 'tis but half a world without sound. Insatiable is the soul until perception flows in through all the senses. WAGNER felt this when he insisted upon the arts being united, thus instructing the soul fully, by a simultaneous appeal, in which that which could not be conveyed by one channel came in through another.

Something of this kind I happened to say in a sermon one night, and the next day I received an anonymous MS.

in which the sense of hearing was discussed in several de-  
 sultory paragraphs, full of ingenuity and, I must  
 121 add, of technical knowledge. The anonymous  
 AN ANONY- MOUS MS. author will, perhaps, pardon me for making use  
 of his ideas here. These remarks interested me for several  
 reasons : first, because they were thoughtful and suggestive ;  
 secondly, because they teemed with accurate information ;  
 thirdly, because the argument from design, now habitually  
 set aside, is unexpectedly endorsed from a scientific plat-  
 form ; and lastly, because the description of the ear from  
 a musical standpoint very fitly led up to the meditations  
 which I am about to offer to my reader on hearing music.

My unknown correspondent began by pointing out that  
 the human ear was the most perfect conceivable mechanism

122. for the reception and transmission of musical  
 THE HUMAN sounds. He added, on what authority I know  
 EAR.

not, that as regards structural aggregation of  
 elements, this has been so since the creation of the world ;  
 no alterations under the influences of time are supposed to  
 have occurred. The progressive evolution of music has not  
 been accompanied by any synchronous changes in the  
 acoustic apparatus of the human ear. Yet in the human ear  
 we find provisions for the differentiation of noises and  
 musical notes, from the canon's crash to the one sixty-fourth  
 of a musical tone—the former (probably) in the labyrinth,  
 the latter in the fibres of Corti, ( $33\frac{1}{3}$  to each semitone). We

have sympathetically vibrating membranes and strings of varying tension, capable of answering to an almost infinite variety of fundamental tones, discriminating their pitch ; we even have dampers, to arrest vibrations.

Again, in the human ear we have had from all time a telephonic membrane (the tympanum) capable of transmitting 4,000 vibrations a second to the central electro-magnetic medium (or brain) of the human telegraphic system of nerves and branch offices, in which the sensations arising from the perception of sound are generated and reflected.

As in the case of colour and the differentiation of various spectrum rays, presumably dependent upon the heat, velocity, and angle of refraction of the ray as it strikes the retinal elements, so in musical variety of tones, an *educational* evolution must have been at work in the recognition and discrimination of sound waves and vibrations of varying length and intensity. But this involves *no* necessary change in physical conformation, retinal or auditory, only a functional development necessitated by the ever-increasing demands of sound. MR. GLADSTONE has attempted to show the ignorance of the ancients of the colour *red*, how many changes in the retinal power of differentiating and answering to the creative genius of man, exercised through the accidental discoveries of the chemical art, have occurred since the Homeric age ? Take all our modern varieties of colour :—

How must certain ages of colour-training influence

the retina in its actual or progressive functional development?

Similarly, how largely must certain periods of musical genius, with their correlative expressions, in contemporaneous musical compositions, have affected the functional powers of the acoustic elements in the ear and the hearing brain centre in which lay the latent capacities for their reception?

The style, even when clipped, is a little heavy. My anonymous correspondent here exclaims:—

“ Strange and marvellous creative foresight, evidence of *design within design*, anticipatory through the ages of all possible or conceivable variety or combination of varieties in musical evolution ! ”

And he concludes with this quaint general summary:—

“ Most perfect camera (human eye); most perfect telephone (human ear); most perfect violin (human larynx); most perfect hydrostatic apparatus (human heart); most perfect series of mechanical powers (human muscles and tendons, &c.); most perfect telegraphic system (human brain and nerves); most perfect system of pavements (human skin of hand and foot); most perfect expenditure in relation to supply of fuel (human body itself); most perfect chemical laboratory (human intestinal tract); most perfect architectural arch (human foot and pelvis, &c.); most perfect instrument (human hand, prehensile, &c.); most perfect ‘ ball and socket joint ’ (human shoulder); most perfect mill (human teeth and jaw); most perfect filter

(human lung) ; most perfect disinfectant (human bile) ; most perfect thatch (human hair) ; most perfect screen (the human eye-lid) ; most perfect form of government (the grey cellular system of the human brain).

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## IV.

*HEARING MUSIC.*

WOULD you rather be blind or deaf? Most people will illogically reply, "Neither!" but when pressed, nine out of

123.  
DEAF AND  
BLIND.

ten will be found to answer, "Leave me the sight of my eyes—let me be deaf." Yet all

experience shows that they are wrong. Deafness tries the temper more, isolates more, unfits for social converse, cuts off from the world of breathing emotional activity, tenfold more than blindness. There is something as yet unanalysed about sound, which doubles and intensifies at all points the sense of living : when we hear, we are somehow more alive than when we see. Apart from sound, the outward world has a dream-like and unreal look--we only half believe in it; we miss at each moment what it contains. It presents, indeed, innumerable pictures of still-life; but these refuse to yield up half their secrets. If anyone is inclined to doubt this, let him stop his

ears with cotton wool for five minutes, and sit in the room with some intelligent friend who enjoys the full use of his ears, and at the end of five or ten minutes let the two compare notes. Of course, we must suppose that both are doing nothing, except the one taking stock of his loss, and the other taking stock of his gain.

I sit then, in my chair stone deaf. I look up at the pictures on the wall—a man driving a goat, a hay-stack,

and some pigs—an engraving of MILLAIS “Black

124.

DEAF FOR Brunswicker.” I am tired of the sight of it.  
TEN MINUTES.

I notice the bird on his perch; his mouth is wide open, he looks to me as if he were in a fit. I point at him in an alarmed manner; my friend shakes his head with a smile—the bird’s only singing. I can’t say I am glad to hear it, for I cannot hear anything. Presently my friend rises and goes to the door, opens it—what on earth for? Why, in jumps the cat. I suppose he heard it outside; it might have mewed till doomsday, as far as my ears were concerned. My strange companion has no sooner sat down on his chair, than he jumps up as if stung. He points out, in answer to my bewildered look, that the legs are loose; he must have heard them creak, I suppose. Then he goes up to the clock, and begins winding it up; he must have noticed that it had left off ticking. I might not have found that out for hours. Another start! he rushes from the room, I follow—the maid has spilt the coal-scuttle all

down the stairs ; he probably heard the smash. My wife might have fallen down-stairs and broken her neck, and I should have known nothing about it. No sooner are we alone again, than he once more rises, I know not why ; but I perceive he is met at the door by someone who has called him ; it is of no use for anyone to call me.

There happens to be a kettle on the fire, and at a particular moment my prudent friend rises. I should never have thought of it—the kettle is going to boil over ; he *hears*. All this is insupportable. I am being left out of life—it is worse than being shut up in the dark. I tear the wool out of my ears long before the expiration of the ten minutes, and my friend addresses me as follows :

“ I pass over the canary, the cat, the chair, the coal-scuttle, and the kettle. You happened to find out about them a day after the fair by using your eyes ; but besides all this, of how much vivid life were you deprived—how many details of consciousness, how many avenues of thought were lost to you in less than ten minutes ! As I sat, I could hear your favourite nocturne of CHOPIN being played in the next room. Perhaps you did not know it was raining ; nor should I have noticed it, only I heard it on the sky-light. I therefore rang the bell, ordered a trap-door open in the roof to be shut, and sent the carriage for a lady who would have otherwise had to walk home. You did not notice a loud crack behind you ; but, in fact, a hot coal flew out of the fire, and I seized it in time to prevent mischief. The postman’s knock

reminded me of some letters I ought to write, and I made a note of them. The band playing outside put me in mind of some concert-tickets I had promised to send. A neighbouring church-bell reminded me of the fact that it was Wednesday, and about a quarter to eleven o'clock. Punch and Judy heard in the distance reminded me of the children, and some toys I had promised. I could hear the distant whistle of a train. The pleasant crackling of the fire behind me was most genial. I let a poor bee out who was buzzing madly upon the window-pane. I heard a ring at the street-bell, presently I heard a well-known voice in the hall. I knew who had arrived—I knew who met him; I could shrewdly conjecture where they went together, and I guessed not unnaturally that the children's lessons would be neglected that morning, since a far more agreeable companion had stepped in to monopolise the eldest daughter. Of all which things, my poor friend, you knew nothing, because your ears were stuffed with cotton wool."

Alas! too many of us go through life with our ears stuffed with cotton wool. Some persons can hear, but not

well; others can hear common sounds and musical

125.

THE MUSICAL sounds, and no one would suspect in them any EAR.

defect, until it some day turns out that they do not know the difference between "God save the Queen" and "Auld lang syne." Thus we reach the distinction between the common ear and the musical ear. Then, in

connection with the musical ear, there are mysteries. Some cannot hear sounds lower than a certain note; others cannot hear them higher than a certain note, *as musical sounds*.

The mystery of the musical ear has not been solved. Yet some things are known about it. There is probably no ear so radically defective—except a deaf ear—as to be incapable of a certain musical training. The curate who arrives in a High Church parish without a notion of the right note to intone upon, and with the vaguest powers of singing it when it is given him, in a few months learns to take fairly the various pitches in the service.

But still the question remains—a physiological one—why is one ear musical and another not? PROFESSOR HELMHOLTZ, whose discoveries in the sound-world are

126.

HELMHOLTZ only comparable to the discoveries of NEWTON in ON THE EAR. the world of light, has put forth an ingenious theory somewhat to this effect:—He discovered within the ear, and soaked in a sensitive fluid, rows and rows of microscopic nerves—several hundred in number—each one of which, like the string of a pianoforte, he believed vibrated to some note; therefore, we were to infer that just as a note sung outside a piano will set up in the corresponding wire a sympathetic vibration, so any sound or sounds in the outer world represented by a nerve wire, or nerves in the ear, could be heard by the ear; and, as a consequence, I suppose any absence of, or defect

in these internal nerve wires, would prevent us from hearing the sound as others better constituted would hear it.

The next direct question of musical ear now becomes one of inherited tendency and special training. The musical ear

127. is the ear that has learned—by constantly using  
WHAT IS  
THE MUSICAL  
EAR ? the same intervals—to recognise the tones and semi-tones of the usual scale, and to regard all

variations of quarter-tones as exceptions and subtleties not to be taken account of in the general construction of melody and harmony. Now, our octave, and our division of the octave into tones and semi-tones, is not artificial, but natural, founded as much upon certain laws of sound-vibration as our notation (if I may say so) of colour is founded upon the laws of light-vibration. But although the selection of eight notes with their semi-tones is the natural and scientific scale, seeing that the ear is capable of hearing impartially vast numbers of other vibrations of sound which produce vast numbers of other intervals, quarter-notes, &c., what we have to do in training the musical ear is just to harp on the intervals which compose the musical scale in various keys, and on these only. In this way the ear gets gradually weaned from sympathy with what is out of tune—ceases to be dog-like or savage-like, and becomes the cultured organ for recognising the natural order and progression of those measured and related vibrations which we call musical sound. Of course, a tendency like this can be inherited

just as much as any other, and in almost all cases it can be improved and cultivated.

I have mentioned PROFESSOR HELMHOLTZ's theory, but have reason to think that he is not, on reconsideration, prepared to endorse it fully. The little rows of minute nerve-wires, each vibrating to a definite sound, is indeed a fascinating idea; but whether true or false, it enables us, by a kind of physical parable, to understand the sort of way in which the ear, being capable of perceiving a large variety of sounds, may be trained to give the preference to certain ones by constantly allowing itself to be exercised by their vibrations, and accustoming itself to select certain notes, and establish between them definite and fixed relations. The exact physical mechanism which enables the ear to do this may have yet to be discovered, but that it exists there can be no doubt, and the use and cultivation of it is in fact the use and cultivation of what we call "an ear for music."

And now I feel I owe the reader an apology. When I have some subject which I am desirous to discuss, something

128. over which I may have been brooding for years,  
AN APOLOGY BEFORE THE CURTAIN. my first instinct is to plunge into the middle of it; my second is to begin at the beginning; my third (and this is the one I generally succumb to) is to begin before the beginning. Thus the important remarks which I am about to make on hearing music

have been fairly pushed aside, first, by one preface on the sense of hearing generally, and second, by another preface on the musical ear in particular ; but *In medias res* shall be my motto now ; no more dallying with the subject ; no more strutting in front of the curtain ; no more prologue—the actors wait, the bell rings, the curtain rises ; let us hope there is a good audience.

This is an afternoon "AT HOME." These words, you will observe, are printed in very large type. In a corner

129. of the card we gather from the small word

MRS. DE PERKINS "music," the quite mixed and genial nature "AT HOME." of the whole entertainment. SIGNOR BOREO

GUFFAW, the well-known bass singer, is expected to look in, a few amateurs have promised to help if necessary, and everyone who knows MRS. DE PERKINS is aware that this is one of those two annual assemblies in which that well-meaning lady endeavours to pay off the various dinners and "At Homes" which she may herself have been exposed to during the past year. DE PERKINS, who is elderly, engaged in the city, and not wealthy, won't give dinners ; he does not like these "At Homes," but he is told that they are necessary—and then GUFFAW, who taught MRS. DE PERKINS before she was married, is very good-natured, and so is everyone ; and the rooms, not very large, are soon full, the staircase early ceases to be navigable, and MRS. DE PERKINS, who really is rather nice, stands

at the door, and does her best to catch everyone's eye, although, by a certain wild and anxious look in her face, we know that she is wondering why GUFFAW does not begin.

Jammed into a niche which just fits me if I hold my arms quite stiff, and stand up stark and straight, I presently hear the eminent foreigner begin "In questa

130. <sup>IN A NICHE.</sup> Tomba 'scura." Do I enjoy this song? In

the first place I am ill at ease. I crane my neck to look round the corner: I can just see the portly basso with his thumbs in his waistcoat pockets, but just opposite me stands my hostess receiving more guests, and the consequence is that GUFFAW's "Tomba" is mixed up with all kinds of *sotto voce's*—"So glad you've come," "How's ——?" "You musn't talk," "Tea in the next room"—whilst in front of me conversation, momentarily suspended, recommences, all about some garden party and someone being lost, and where they were found, and who they were with, and so on.

Do I enjoy the music? Whether I do or not, I intend to get out of this miserable niche—away to the other room,

131. <sup>YOU MUST NOT TALK.</sup> where there is tea. The song is over, and there is naturally a pause in the conversation: at last I find someone that I wish to talk to. I am just explaining with unequalled lucidity the new

scheme for boring the Channel Tunnel—attracting, in short, more than one attentive listener—when up trips my anxious but smiling hostess, “You must really listen to this gentleman who is playing: a clergyman, you know, most gifted; he plays nothing but the oldest masters: Bach, and that sort, you know. Hush! hush!” and she glides off tapping and silencing people right and left, just as they have got into a nice chat and are beginning to make way—as I was, in fact.

I look round me. Disappointed, cross, irritable-looking faces, which a moment before were smiling and animated, and from the distance the hard tinkle of the perfectly self-satisfied musician grating upon everyone’s nerves—why? Not because it is so bad, simply because it is not wanted then and there. Gradually, as the everlasting fugue goes on and on, or runs into another fugue, people begin to talk feebly. I begin about the Channel again, but by this time my audience has dispersed; my most devoted hearer—a lady who suffers frightfully from sea-sickness—does not seem to remember where I left off. I can’t quite remember myself—we drop the subject. I have got to begin all over again, but with something different, to someone else; then at last the fugue leaves off. Did anyone enjoy the music? Then GUFFAW is put on to sing a duet just as I was telling that capital story about the sparrow in church. Well, of course it was no good, all the point was taken out of it because I had to hurry over it and end in a guilty kind of underbreath.

I did not stay to hear the new amateur tenor, MR. FLUTULOO, who, I am told, sang with an eye-glass fixed rigidly in one eye, whilst he positively wept with the other. I can believe that the sensation he created may have been considerable, I was a great deal too sore about the Channel Tunnel and the sparrow, &c., to care ; in short, I left MRS. DE PERKINS's At Home in a very bad humour after, I regret to say, hearing some music, but certainly not enjoying it. The moral of this is—

1. Let it be either Music or conversation, but not both.
2. If music, let all the audience be musical, and all the musicians good.
3. Don't cram the room and suffocate the singers, but ask a moderate company, let them all be seated, and let the conversation in between be limited to the merest interchange of courtesies.
4. Avoid the current musical "At Home." The DE PERKINS's method never answers ; it offends the real musicians, encourages musical impostors, and bores the company.

Some people enjoy themselves at concerts. But "some people" and "concerts" are vague terms. You must go

132. with the right people, and you must go to the  
CONCERTS  
AND  
BALLADS. right concerts. These right conditions will, of course, vary according to taste and cultivation. The right people for *you* are in all cases the people with whom you are musically in sympathy. The right con-

certs for *you* are the concerts you can at least in some measure enjoy and understand. The classical pedant sneers at people who delight in ballad concerts and hate WAGNER, but the greatest composers have not been above ballads; and although there are bad ballads, yet the characteristics of a ballad—namely, that it should be lyrical, simple, and easily understood—are not bad characteristics. Some of the greatest men have been infinite losers because they happened to be generally unintelligible, whilst inferior people have exercised an influence out of proportion to their merits, simply because they made themselves generally understood. And be it observed, that this element of intelligibility is one common to the ballad and all the *greatest* works of art. The greatest men all “strike home.” The transfiguration is simple—so is the Moses of Michael Angelo. So is HANDEL’s *Messiah* taken as a whole. So is the *Elijah* of MENDELSSOHN. They are a great deal more than simple, but they are *that*. I have drawn a deplorable scene descriptive of the hearing of music in private; let me revive a scene, fresh, doubtless, in the memory of many now living, in which the hearing of music in public probably reached its climax. I allude to the production of MENDELSSOHN’s *Elijah* at the Birmingham festival of 1846, upon which occasion MENDELSSOHN himself wielded the conductor’s bâton.

On that memorable August morning in the year 1846,

when, punctual to the minute, FELIX MENDELSSOHN stepped

133. into the conductor's seat, and, facing the immense audience assembled in the noble Town  
THE "ELIJAH"  
AT BIRMINGHAM  
HAM IN 1846.  
MENDELSSOHN.

of applause which was taken up and redoubled by the chorus and orchestra—how little did that vast audience know that in little more than a year from that time the heart of the great composer would have ceased to beat! That day, we must always think, was the crowning moment of his life, and that great oratorio seems to us the culmination of his mighty musical and dramatic faculty. All those who were present declare that that first public performance was one never to be forgotten—the novelty of treatment, the startling effects, the enchanting subjects, the prodigious daring of some of the situations, the heavenly melodies which have since become musical watchwords, and, above all, the presence of the composer, who sent an electric thrill through the room, and inspired chorus, band, and singers with the same lofty enthusiasm which made him so great and irresistible in achievement—all this may now, alas, be remembered, but can never be reproduced. It made the hearing of the music of *Elijah* for the first time a perfectly typical occasion, and one whose conditions, as far as they are realisable, should never cease to be striven after.

A dire contrast to such performances as this may be found any day in those extraordinary entertainments called mixed

concerts, where every style and every composer, from  
 134. BACH to OFFENBACH—save the mark!—may be  
 THE MIXED MONSTER heard. From these the true musician retires  
 CONCERT. with what may be called a harmonic indigestion  
 of the worst possible description. MENDELSSOHN, SPOHR,  
 MEYERBEER, MOSCHELES, and VON BÜLOW, have in turn  
 expressed their amazement and horror at the popular notion  
 of a concert programme. But all this is a part of the  
 general state of musical ignorance in England, and can only  
 disappear when increased culture makes the incongruity of  
 such mixtures apparent to their present admirers.

There are other kinds of mixed concerts which have their excuse, but they are private; there are no contradictions,

135. no aggravations, no jolts in them. We are  
 THE MIXED CHAMBER not shocked out of one phase of emotion into  
 CONCERT. another; we are not compelled to swallow an  
 Italian *buffo* song after a duet from MOZART's requiem, or  
 a ballad of CLARIBEL, followed by a bit of SPOHR's *Last Judgment*. And yet the programme is mixed, varied,—as  
 the conversation of friends is varied, flitting bird-like  
 through many lands, pausing above giddy precipices,  
 gliding over summer seas, lingering in bright meadows,  
 poised above populous cities, lingering about the habitations  
 of man. But no more prosy efforts to describe what  
 is indescribable; let the curtain rise once more and let the  
 actors themselves appear before me.

She is fair, with brown-red hair; she is serene, with one of those quiet, equable temperaments, whose privilege it is to blend others into harmony by yielding  
136. SHADOWS OF THE PAST. to each new wave of thought and feeling as it rises, with that sort of simple, unaffected pleasure, the very sight of which makes others happy. Alas! she has been dead these many summers; yet it is the privilege of memory to unlock the doors of old rooms, and find there suddenly, as in a dream, the scenes that have faded out of the real world for ever. For a moment I close my eyes. It is an autumn evening by the sea. How pleasantly the waves came plashing in as we paced the shore in the deepening light! We spoke of those weird songs of SCHUBERT which seem like sad eyes looking out into the sunset over some waste of measureless waters; we spoke of those Nocturnes of CHOPIN, like dream-scenes, painted on tinted backgrounds.

"His life," said FERDINAND, "was what NOVALIS would have called a dream within a dream."

"Yes," I answered, "but a dream always starting from reality and breaking into it again."

"And is not that reflected in his music?" rejoined ESTELLE. "It makes it sometimes quite terrible to me, the harsh contrast between the reality and the dream, a chord, a transition bar, and then fainter and fainter grows the shadow-land, so intensely real and passionate the moment before,—it darkens and melts into a thin, cold mist,—

just as those gorgeous shadows of purple and orange on the sea, which seemed a minute ago almost substantial, melt and leave the cold sea dark, and the air keen and sharp."

"Yes, that was the history of CHOPIN's life; the love of MADAME SAND was his dream, and the awakening was the cold sea and the sharp, keen air that killed him."

"But before the end what dreams haunted him, fragments of the never-forgotten days, embalmed in fugitive melody, and mystically woven harmonies! I think he must have lived over again perfectly in such moments. They were the realities, and the outer life, latterly at least, became the dream. Listen!

• • • •  
"What sweetness is here, this grassy bank, these drooping citron flowers, these glowing azaleas, fringing the summer Islet, set like a jewel in the bosom of the Mediterranean! The name of LUCREZIA FLORIANI rises to my lips, the name of the PRINCE KAROL, who is CHOPIN. Time is not, these skies are eternally blue, this welling up of crystal water, just kissing the fringe of drooping blossom against the shore, this hum of insect life, breaking the silence, only to make the summer air more slumbrous, and the little rain-cloud on the horizon, which, toward evening, will creep up, until the distance is blotted out, and the black sky is rent with forked lightning. Such things

entered into CHOPIN's soul, and live for ever in his profound and strange musical reveries.

" But apart from this deeply personal element, the deepest thing of all, as it is in the nature of every true Pole, was the undertone of sad patriotism; this pierces when least expected, this is never long absent. Listen ! . . . . .

" It is a dazzling crowd, glittering with diamond lights—a profusion of rare jewels; the halls are filled with perfume, the strains of a mazurka are in the air, they seem to call forth as by magic, and support with the breath of some mystic life, these floating, swaying forms of beautiful women, and these countrymen of CHOPIN, without a country, and as the dance goes weaving on, with a certain dreamy and pensive grace, we perceive that in the heart of the music there is a deep wound, a minor chord of inextinguishable pain, hidden by lovely arabesques of subtle sweetness, winning, beguiling, subduing; but never for long hiding the forlorn sorrow of a hopeless, but undying patriotism. Now it is a Polonaise. Listen ! . . . . .

" What enterprise, what indomitable effort to achieve the impossible, what frantic exploits, as of one resolved to die on the battle-field, but before dying to overwhelm with deeds of intrepid valour his terrible and relentless foe! The pauses are the pauses of sheer exhaustion, in them we

catch through the sulphurous clouds a sight of remote battle-scenes and distant combinations, until the warrior rises again in his strength, and once more for a time his enemies fly scattered."

"I shall think of all this when I play your favourite Polonaise." She drew her shawl close to her—the mist crept round the bay—it was no longer summer; we went in, we three, how happy, how harmonious, blended by the grace—the free, the tender grace—of one lovely and beloved presence!

Unlock the door—let no footfall from the present disturb this shadow-scene. It is the old room—the familiar room.

137. I see her there. There is no sense of strange-

*A NIGHT IN THE PAST.* ness or unreality about her; she smiles, as she was wont to smile, she moves softly—her fingers turn the music leaves—the candles are lighted—her face is half in shade—I can hear her low melodious laugh. I seem to be once more holding my Stradivarius violin lovingly. What! there is no sign of dust, or age, or neglect about this long-closed room. As we go back to past chapters of a beloved story, so have I gone back to read again a fragment of life, and as I look, and look, and look, the intervening years roll away, the shadows become real, "till only the dead seem living, and only the living seem dead."

Let it be MENDELSSOHN's D minor trio, the playing of

that night remains with me—we seemed alive—sensitively alive to every vibration; her fingers caressed the cool ivory keys lovingly, the Stradivarius spoke rapturously to the lightest touch of the bow, the full-toned violoncello gave out the deep but tender notes, like the voices of the sea in enchanted caves. How clean and “seizing,” as the French say, was her rendering of the opening movement! How wonderfully woven-in were the parts! We all three made but one, yet retaining our perfect individualities. A mystic presence invisible seemed to be with us, we felt as if playing in the presence of the great, the gentle MENDELSSOHN; and though we played, so absorbed were we, that we seemed at the same moment to be following our own music like listeners, in ourselves and out of ourselves. Between the movements we spoke not. I marked the flush upon her cheek—the bright light in her eyes. He was grave, intensely pre-occupied—the dream-power was upon us all. The peace and full contentment of the slow movement with its rich and measured flow of melody melting at last into that heavenly trance at the close, which leaves us at the open gates of Paradise; then the sudden break at the scherzo, as though a joyous troop of lower earth-spirits had burst in to tear us away from the divine contemplation, and toss us back into a world of wild uproar and merriment; then a slight pause before the tempestuous, but intensely earnest, conclusion. Here is the battle of life, with its suspense, its failure, its endeavour — striving for the

victory, its wild and passionate overthrow, its indomitable recovery and untamed valour; that is the bracing and sublime atmosphere of the last movement more true to life than ecstasy, more wholesome than peace, more dignified than pleasure; and that is where the D minor trio leaves us.

Then we drifted into talk of MENDELSSOHN. As she sat she occasionally played some fragment from a concerto—some striking chord from the *St. Paul*, some passage from *Ruy Blas*, or an echo from the incomparably delicate overture to the beautiful “*Melusine*,” till one said “Sing,” and she sang from SCHUMANN, the ballads from HEINE—those tragedies and melodramas in three verses, or in two lines, and BRAHM’s “*Guten Abend, Gute Nacht*.” Then followed songs without words, and sitting in the shadow I saw her face in the light, and felt her spirit rise and fall upon the pulses of invisible sound, in unison with ours. Then came some of ERNST’s reveries on the violin, and so the evening wore away, and we took no account of the hours.

Were there any other listeners? Yes, at times one and another of them would recall a passage—a likeness between MENDELSSOHN and BACH, a phrase of SCARLATTI, or a combination of WAGNER in a BRAHM’s movement.

This, if you like, was a mixed programme, but its parts were mixed with subtle sympathies, and united by the finest threads of thought and emotion. Thus we moved on from one delight to another with no sense of un-

pleasant or disjointed break—as those who pass out of a lovely grotto into the sunlight, and after winding through hedge-rows of May bloom to the quiet shore, pass back into a garden of tall trees and smooth lawns, and thence to some lovely conservatory filled with tropical bloom, thence to a marble vestibule, thence to halls of tapestry, and luxurious couches and repose. And there has been no break—nothing has jarred upon us in the midst of variety. Hand in hand we have been with friends; we have seen smiles upon dear faces. We have poured forth words, and soul has been revealed to soul; and without, the world of fair things has imaged the life of vivid and inexhaustible thought and feeling within. Compare, I pray you, these parables of “Hearing Music” aright, with the strange and disjointed legend of “MRS. DE PERKINS and her musical At Home.”

I will take a wider sweep. I have received the keenest national impressions from music.

At midnight I heard the players pass by. The warm Italian air, scarce chilled by the night, came in from the orange gardens. I leaned my head forward to breathe its full fragrance. The musicians had come from yonder lighted palace; now they pass on up through the groves of citron and myrtle, from the distant deep shadows, the regular pulse of the music brings back the feeling of the dance; it is a mere echo, a shadow

dance—fainter and fainter now ; I can hear it no more. I look up, the stars burn like gold.

All Italy in a moment is resumed for me in that slight picture. A few bars of music, heard at random, may conjure it up again—first the emotion, then the picture.

• • • • •  
The Feast of the Kermess was over in Amsterdam. The town filled with country people had been emptying all

through the night. The booths in the market-  
<sup>139.</sup> places were struck. I stood high up, looking  
<sub>HOLLAND.</sub> over the network of canals towards the Scheldt.

Above my head I heard the cry of the wild swan, winging its way southward from Sweden, and below a rough chorus of men and women came over the bridge. It was loud, boisterous singing, but in parts well defined, rhythmic, and full of a strong charm ; they passed into a side street ; the drinking chorus seemed to split into fragments and then cease. How often has it since rung in my ears, and so often has it brought back with it the hearty, coarse, eager life of Holland, and the keen, brackish odour of the wind blowing in from the North Sea.

But in each case observe the peculiar, direct power which  
music has of dealing with the nerve centres.  
<sup>140.</sup>

*EMOTION AND THE PAINTER.* It is not the image which is recalled and which brings back the feeling, but the sound awakes directly a peculiar rhythm of nervous wave-motion, which

is the physical vehicle for a peculiar feeling. Thus a breath of the past in a desert at first unpeopled, the very atmosphere of a past moment is restored, in which mystic air the forms of dead scenes and persons begin to live and grow again, and at last become intensely vivid. In this, note that music differs from every other art. The painter and poet alike depend directly upon scenes and concrete images for their emotion, but the musician depends directly upon emotion for his scenes and images, and even when these are absent, he is not less potent—sometimes more so—for he can handle and mould the temperature of the mind itself at will, wind up feeling unconnected with thought through every semitone, modulate and change it, fit and unfit us for exertion, make us forget the hard, persistent images of pain and trouble, and the coarse realism that damps joy,—by creating an atmosphere within in which these cannot breathe, and so are expelled as to any power they may have to move us,—actually expelled for a season from the mind.

There is a phrase, “I was carried away by the music.” That expression is true to feeling; it means, “When I heard

141.      this or that, I ceased to be affected by the out-

MAGIC OF  
MUSIC. ward things or thoughts which a moment before moved me; I entered a world of other feeling, or—what I before possessed was so heightened and changed that I seemed to have been ‘carried away’ from the old

thing in a moment." But it would be still truer to say, not "music carried me away," but "music carried away, or changed, the mood, and with it the significance of the things which occupied me in that mood."

The easy command over the emotions possessed by sound, and elaborated by the art of music, is due to the direct

142. impact of the air-waves upon the drum of the

SECRET OF  
THE AUDI-  
TORY NERVE. ear, which collects them and sends them to the seat of consciousness in the brain by means of the auditory nerve. The same, of course, is true of the waves of colour upon the eye, scent upon the nose, and vibrations of touch taken by the brain even from the most distant nerve in the body. But the auditory nerve has in some things a strange advantage and prerogative of power over the others. First, the distance from the ear to the brain is shorter than that of any other of the sensitive surfaces, so the time taken to convey the impressions of sound is less, and therefore the impact more direct. This measured by time is infinitesimal, but measured by emotional effect it counts for much. Secondly, the vibrations of sound as distinguished from the vibrations of light, and even the vibrations of touch, which are, after all, differently local,—the vibrations of sound induce a sympathetic vibration in every nerve in the body; they set it going, in short, as the strings of a piano are set going by the stroke of a hammer on the floor, and when the sound is excessive or peculiar, all the

great ganglionic centres are disturbed, the diaphragm and many other nerves and muscles are influenced, the stomach is affected, the spine "creeps," as we say, the heart quickens and throbs with strong beatings in the throat. Thus a curiously sympathetic action is set up through this physical peculiarity which sound has of shaking, moving, and at times causing to tremble the human body.

But the cause of the sympathetic action of the great ganglionic centres under the pulsations of sound lies deeper still. It is to be found in the fact that the auditory nerve is closely connected, at its origin in the *medulla oblongata* of the brain, with that of the important *nervus vagus* or *pneumogastic* supplying the heart, lungs, and the most important abdominal viscera. It is also in intimate communication with the branches of the *great sympathetic nerve* from the *ganglia* which supply the muscles regulating the tension of the ear's drum, and which modify the effect of the waves of sound upon it. And these branches, again, are in direct communication with the *vagus* and the great ganglionic centres, controlling the action of the heart and stomach. Thus excitation of the auditory nerve readily agitates these close neighbours, and they proceed to spread the influence far and wide through all the delicate network of sympathetic nerve telegraphy which pervades the entire system. Thus the effect of sound is speedily propagated through myriad side-channels, until the whole body is thrilling with its confluent waves.

Now we can explain, perhaps, why it is that our musical sensations are different in small rooms and large ones, or, to speak more closely, why the relations between the volume of sound and the space to be filled must be suitable in order to produce the right effect.

<sup>143.</sup> I can sit close to a piano and listen to a “Lied ohne Wörte.” I can take in every inflection of touch with ease, not a refinement is lost, but if I go to the end of a long room, the impact is less direct, the pleasure is less intense: the player must then exaggerate all his effects, hence a loss of refinement and ease. Public players and singers constantly make shipwreck thus in private rooms. Accustomed to vast spaces, they roar and bang until the audience is deaf, and the only reason why the unknowing applaud on such occasions, and the only difference, as far as they are concerned, between the professional and the amateur, is simply that the first is so much louder than the second. This makes them clap their hands and cry “Bravo!” but in reality they are applauding a defect.

The only musical sounds which really master vast spaces like the Albert Hall are those of a mighty organ or an <sup>144.</sup> immense chorus. The Handel Festival choruses are fairly proportioned to the Crystal Palace, but <sup>MUSIC AND SPACE.</sup> on one occasion, when a terrific thunderstorm burst over Sydenham in the middle of *Israel in Egypt*, every one beneath that crystal dome felt that, acoustically, the

peal of thunder was very superior to the whole power of the chorus, because the relation between the space to be filled and the volume of sound required to fill it was in better proportion. But there is still something which has not yet been said for small sounds in large places. Transport yourself in imagination to the Albert Hall on some night when, as is usually the case, there is but a scanty orchestra, and presently a new mystery of sound will present itself to you. At first you will be disappointed. Anyone can hear that the hall is not properly *occupied* by the sound ; the violins should be trebled at least, several of the wind instruments doubled, &c. You think you will not listen to this charming E flat symphony of MOZART ; you cannot help feeling that you lose a delicate inflection here, a staccato there, a flute tone, a pianissimo on the drum, or a whole piece of counter melody,—owing to the scattered conditions of isolated vibrations lost in space.

But you have still something to learn, something like a new musical truth, which few people seem yet to have

145. noticed. Listen ! The sounds from the band

SOUND-  
FILTERING. reach you too late, perhaps. They are not simultaneous ; the impact on the ear is somewhat feeble, you must even strain attentively to catch what is passing, but the more you do so the easier it becomes, just as the eye, in looking through a lens, may see all dim, but gaze on until the objects grow sharp and

clear. The nerves of the eye have adapted themselves to the new conditions, the longer you look the better you see. So in these vast uncomfortable spaces, the longer you listen the better you hear. A certain special training is required, and then gradually a new quality is perceived—we must give the process a new name—"sound filtering." The Albert Hall and the Crystal Palace are great Sound-filters. From this point of view, which it requires some delicate and attentive ear-culture to appreciate, new delights are born from the defective space conditions usually complained of. I have heard the voice of Madame Lemmens-Sherrington in the extreme distance at the Crystal Palace, when she was exerting herself to the utmost, and it sounded like a voice from heaven, full of unearthly, far-away sweetness; the same intensity and volume in a small room would have been intolerable. I have heard Bottesini on the double-bass in the open air with similar effect.

Listen to an orchestra or quartet, however fine, in a moderate-sized room; there is the catgut, the rosin, the scrape, the bite of horse-hair on strings, the earthly cannot be completely got rid of, but space will filter all that, and leave nothing but a kind of spiritual disembodied sound, like the tones of those plugged pipes in the organ that seem to steal out of some remote cloud-land with a certain veiled sweetness that makes us hold our breath.

Since I have learned to listen to these peculiar effects in all their strange gradations, a new class of musical impres-

sions has been revealed to me, and I have become much reconciled to hearing music in vast spaces. I do not go there for the kind of normal impressions, for the direct study, for the strong, immediate impact gained from music in a moderately-sized room—I lose much of all that—but I gain a number of new abnormal effects, which also have a power over certain hidden depths and distant fastnesses of the emotional region.

Music has a vast future before it. We are only now beginning to find out some of its uses. With the one

exception of its obvious and admitted helpful-  
146. <sup>BENEFICENCE</sup> ness, as an adjunct of religious worship, as a  
<sup>OF MUSIC.</sup> vehicle for and incentive of religious feeling, I had almost said that we had as yet discovered none of its uses. It has been the toy of the rich, it has often been a source of mere degradation to both rich and poor, it has been treated as mere jingle and noise—supplying a rhythm for the dance, a kind of Terpsichorean *tom-tom*—or serving to start a Bacchanalian chorus—the chief feature of which has certainly not been the music. And yet those who have their eyes and ears open, may read in these primitive uses whilst they run the hints of music's future destiny as a vast civiliser, recreator, health-giver, work-inspirer, and purifier of man's life. The horse knows what he owes to his bells. The factory girls have been instinctively forced into singing, finding in it a solace and assistance in work.

And for music, the health-giver, what an untrodden field is there! Have we never known an invalid forget pain and weariness under the stimulus of music? Have you never seen a pale cheek flush up, a dull eye sparkle, an alertness and vigour take possession of the whole frame, and animation succeed to apathy? What does all this mean? It means a truth that we have not fully grasped, a truth pregnant with vast results to body and mind. It means that music attacks the nervous system directly, reaches and rouses where physic and change of air can neither reach nor rouse.

Music will some day become a powerful and acknowledged therapeutic. And it is one especially appropriate to this

excited age. Half our diseases, some physicians

147.

MUSIC AS A RESTORATIVE. say all our diseases, come from disorder of the nerves. How many ills of the mind precede the ills of the body! Boredom makes more patients than fever, want of interest and excitement, stagnation of the emotional life, or the fatigue of over-wrought emotion, lies at the root of half the ill-health of our young men and women. Can we doubt the power of music to break up that stagnation? Or, again, can we doubt its power to soothe? to recreate an over-strained emotional life, by bending the bow the other way? There are moods of exhausted feeling in which certain kinds of music would act like poison, just as whip and spur which encourage

the racer at first, tire him to death at last. There are other kinds of music which soothe, and, if I may use the word, lubricate the worn ways of the nervous centres. You will ask what music is good for that? We reply, judgment and common-sense, and, above all, sympathy, affectional and musical sympathy, will partly be your guide, but experience must decide. Let some friend well versed in the divine art sit at the piano, and let the tired one lie on a couch and prescribe for herself or for himself. This will happen: "Do not play that *Tannhäuser* overture just now, it wears me out, I cannot bear it"; or, "Yes—sing that 'Du bist die Ruh,' and after that I must hear MENDELSSOHN's 'Notturno,' out of the *Midsummer Night's Dream*"; and then—and then—what must come next must be left to the tact and quick sympathy of the musician. I have known cases where an hour of this treatment did more good than bottlesful of bark or pailsful of globules; but I do not wish to over-state the case. I merely plead for an unrecognised truth, and I point to a NEW VOCATION—the vocation of the Musical Healer.

How many a girl might turn her at present uncared-for and generally useless musical abilities to this gentle and

tender human use. Let her try. At the end

148.

THE MUSICAL HEALER. of the séance, let her and her patient note the abatement of the head-ache brought about directly by the counter excitement of a nerve-current set

up by music. Let her friend admit that she has suffered less during that hour,—the mind having been completely called off from the contemplation of a special pain, and the pain meanwhile having passed or abated. There are cases chiefly connected with disorders of the spine, cases of apathy, where music is almost the only thing which seems to stir the torpid nerves and set up a commotion, quickening the heart and flushing the cheek. Then, I say, let music open the shut gate, and let health come in that way, *caelestis janitor aulae*. But I want, before I pass, to fix my musical healer upon the reader's mind. She is gentle, she is glowing with health, but not boisterous; she has a quick sympathy for pain; she has a cool, soft hand that does the hot brow good; she rather moves than walks: the sound of her foot-fall is seldom heard. Oh, Alma! the fostering one, the healing presence, you are in many households, but you hardly know your powers; the sick bless you; they love to hear your voice; but days and weeks pass, and you never exercise your gifts for them. You are a beautiful musician, but your music would not make you the healer without your tact in applying it, your sympathy, your quick judgment, your watchfulness of effect, your faculty of giving yourself when you sing and when you play. It is the union of musical talent with personal qualities like yours, that will give you grace to apply the medicine of music to disease.

Have you ever thought of that? You have played

casually to the weary, the idle, or even the sick, but you have not with reflection played to refresh, to stimulate, or to soothe ; and you cannot do this all at once.

1. You must have the idea of doing it : that is, you must conceive of music as a therapeutic art.

2. You must gain a certain easy command of a wide range of compositions that you may select your remedies wisely.

3. You must take care to establish between yourself and your patients that kindly rapport which will predispose them to listen to you ; it must be the hand of something like a friend upon the white keys or upon the strings of a zither, an instrument of heavenly soothing qualities as of harps in the wind at sunset. It must be the voice of something like a friend ; the voice that has said with no feigned earnestness, but with the wide, warm love of a Christ-like nature, “I wish I could do you good.” Such a voice will sing well and pleasantly, and bring peace.

4. Self-training, judgment, and experience generally. The music-healer must indeed have gifts of mind, but hers will be almost as much a vocation to be learnt as that of nursing itself. She must study different kinds of temperament and disease, watch and write down and remember the effect which certain pieces or kinds of music have on certain temperaments. But the fascination of the new calling would lie in the delight of its exercise, the variety and endless excitement and surprises of its results, the inces-

sant study of character, the constant self-training and cultivation of sympathy for a definite and immediate end, and in the intense happiness of feeling that upon the waves of heavenly melody and harmony which lifted up your own soul, another's pain and distress were floating away, and that you had been the active agent in procuring this pleasure, this relief, this recovery.

Let some pen more competent than mine expand this new doctrine of "music considered as a therapeutic." If it found support from any well-accredited medical authority, with what faith and favour would it be received by thousands of sufferers! with what alacrity would spring up right and left our musical healers, coveting and exercising earnestly the best gifts of character and training! It would not be long before we had a hand-book on the subject, with suggestions for a course of treatment based on actual experience.

Music is not only a body healer; it is a mind regulator.

149. The great educational function of music remains  
"MUSIC AND MORALS" almost to be discovered. The future mission  
AGAIN. of music for the million is the DISCIPLINE  
OF EMOTION.

What is the ruin of art? Ill-regulated emotion.

What is the ruin of life? Again, ill-regulated emotion.

What mars happiness? What destroys manliness? What sullies womanhood? What checks enterprise? What spoils

success? Constantly the same—ill-regulated emotion. The tongue is a fire, an uncontrolled and passionate outburst swallows up many virtues, and blots out weeks of kindness.

There is one thing more important than knowing self; it is governing self. There is one thing better than crushing impulse; it is using impulse. The life of the ascetic is half true, the life of the voluptuary is the other half true. The stoic may be said to be blind at least of one eye. The cynic is very nearly blind of both, since the power and the passion and the splendid uses of existence are hidden from him, and all these go wrong in various ways, from abusing, misusing, or neglecting the emotional life.

The Greek was not far wrong when he laid such stress on gymnastics and music. Of music, indeed, in its modern,

150. exhaustive, and subtle developments, as the <sup>THE GREEKS'</sup> language of the emotions, he knew nothing; "MUSICAL" DISCIPLINE. but his faint guess was with a certain fine and unerring instinct in the right direction; shame upon us that, in the blaze of modern music, we have almost missed its deepest meaning! The Greek at least understood how sound regulated motion, which is, after all, only the physical expression of emotion; not a procession, not a social gathering, not a gymnasium, nay, not even an important oration, was thought complete without the introduction of musical sound, and that not as a mere jingle or pastime, but to regulate the order, the variety, the intensity

of bodily motions, actions, and words, so that throughout there might be an elaborate discipline carried on through musical sound, a discipline which, thus learned at the schools, met the Greek again at every turn in his social and political life, and ended by making his earth-life that rounded model of physical and intellectual harmony, and perfection which has made at once the despair and wonder of sculptors, poets, and philosophers of all ages.

And we living in the full development of this divine art of Music, put it to less practical uses than the Greek, who never got beyond music as a rhythmic and melodic regulator of dancing, feasting, and oratory !

It remains for us to take up the pregnant hint, and claim modern music as the great organ of emotional culture and emotional discipline. This practical view of the unique and perfect functions of the musical art is, I think, sufficiently new to require a little further explanation.

"How," it will be asked, "apart from mere pleasure—pleasure, if you will, of a harmless and elevating kind—am I a bit better for the hearing of music?"

In answering this question, I leave out the effect produced on bodily health through the agitation of the nervous centres by musical sound, as dwelt upon above. I will come to close quarters again with Music and Morals, and I will show how hearing music in the right way gets up, as it were, the steam power of emotion, collects it, concentrates

it, and then puts it through such innumerable stages of discipline, that the very force of emotion which, allowed to run wild, brings ruin into life, grows, through the right hearing of great and skilful music, docile, controlled, indefinitely plastic, or at the call of the will, resistless in might.

Music, in short, is bound, when properly used and understood, to train us in the exercise of our emotions, as the gymnasium trains us in the exercise of our limbs. The Greek understood both these uses, we probably understand neither.

First, then, music rouses the emotions. Inward activities long dormant or never before awakened, are called up, and

151. become new powers within the breast ; for,  
MECHANISM  
OF THE EMO- remember, emotion nerves for action. The  
TIONAL ART. stupidest horse that goes up hill to the sound of bells, the timidest soldier that marches to battle with fife and drum, the most delicate girl who spins round tireless in the dance, the poorest labourer who sings at his work—any of them are good enough to prove that music rouses and sustains emotion.

But, secondly, music disciplines and controls emotion.

That is the explanation of the art of music, as distinguished from the mere power of the musical sound. You can rouse with a stroke ; but to guide, to moderate, to control, to raise and depress, to combine, to work out a definite

scheme involving appropriate relations and proportions of force, and various mobility—for this you require the subtle machinery of an art, and the direct machinery for stirring up and regulating emotion, is the wonderful vibratory mechanism created by the art of music.

Those who wish to see how, as the hand-maid to thought, music steps in to elaborate and control emotion, I will refer

152. to my analysis of *Elijah*, in *Music and Morals*; but I wish to give here a short example of the "Song without words." way in which a train of abstract emotion, capable of being fitted to different ideas, or capable of underlying more than one series of mental events (so long as the relations of them be similar and parallel), can be roused and developed in a fixed artistic form by music. My present limits will not allow me to take one of the great symphonies of BEETHOVEN or MENDELSSOHN for this. I will select a "Lied ohne Wörte"; let us take, for instance, No. 10, the fourth Lied of the Second Book. I will mention the bars by their numbers, instead of using technical terms, such as a key of D or F, subdominant, tonic, &c. It is difficult to describe mental states apart from particular thoughts, but as far as possible we will try to do so, and so express the consciousness of a state of mind which might be equally appropriate to several separate and distinct, though similar and parallel trains of thought.

Understand what I mean by similar and parallel trains of

thought. Let me even appeal to the eye, and put my similar thoughts in parallel columns, thus :—

- |                                   |                               |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| I. Man losing his temper.         | I. Sea ruffled with wind.     |
| II. Man lost his temper.          | II. Sea convulsed.            |
| III. Smashes the furniture.       | III. Thunder and lightning.   |
| IV. Is appeased by wife.          | IV. Blue sky, wind drops.     |
| V. All is forgiven and forgotten. | V. Sun breaks out, sea calms. |

One, and the same train of emotion, or general cast of feeling may fitly underlie such two progressive scenes; but the events must in every case be similar in tone, and run parallel; only in this sense does music, as it is sometimes loosely said, mean all sorts of things to different people.

I now return to an emotional analysis of Lied IV., of Book II., MENDELSSOHN. With the first bars of rapid semi-

153. quavers, increasing from *p* to *sf*, we are thrown LIED OHNE WÖRTE, BOOK II. 4, 5, 6, into a state of restless emotion, dashed (bars 7, 8, 9, 10), the flash of suspense passes off, lowering back the tone of mind to its first state; that state, instead of subsiding as before, passes into a reflex sort of reasoning upon itself, as though one said (15, 16, 17,  $\frac{1}{2}18$ ), “ But why should I disquiet myself in vain? ” ( $\frac{1}{2}18$ , 19, 20). “ I will resist, I will shake it off (21), I will be free (22), the cloud has passed (23), I see my joy (24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30). O ecstatic vision, I lose myself in this splendid

revelation, I float out upon the tide of triumph. Now I rest, bathed in tranquil peace, and perfect satisfaction (31, 32,  $\frac{1}{2}33$ ), I prolong the dream." But already the ecstatic glow has cooled ( $\frac{1}{2}33$ , 34, 35, 36), a faint touch of earth bitterness, a misgiving (D sharp) has crept in (37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42), and is confirmed until the vision of bliss is almost obliterated, and the emotion is in danger of sinking back at once to its first condition of morbid restlessness, but that would be monotonous (45); at this point it is, therefore, caught by new reflex action of the feelings, and a struggle takes place (46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51), represented by the opening subject struggling up in the bass, checked, then struggling up in the treble, checked at *sf*, and then *cresc.*, struggling up (51) once more. Then there is a pause, emotion is at a standstill, and at last grows almost tepid and indifferent; dropping at 57, *p* and *dim.*, almost listless, when at 60 the struggle recommences with fresh violence, the great effort of the mind to cast out the restless, passionate broodings of the first page (60 to 71), produces a storm of conflicting emotions, in which now one side, now another seems uppermost, till at last the mind, trembling on the morbid verge, passes over the line with a kind of wilful and helpless self-surrender; but this time the experiences through which it has passed make it impossible quite to repeat the morbid and restless series, and (72) only half the first subject is given, the emotion is hampered, it does not run easily, it cannot get on, then (76) the same phrase

over again, *piu f*, with growing impatience, a change of some sort is evidently at hand (81), the old subject is tossed away as worthless and unfit for the purpose, as the spirit feels itself breathed upon once more, and held by some new force, through a series of bars (81 to 87), until expectancy is crowned, and with a crescendo of ascending octaves, which makes us fairly hold our breath, whilst the action of the pulse is rapidly quickened, suddenly,—but this time on a higher pitch, and with quite bewildering power of effect—the glory breaks again upon the soul, and we seem “rapt from the fickle and the frail,” and caught up into that splendid air of joy and bounding triumph. The poor shaken and earth-worn spirit is thus held for a little space in Paradise. It is its last gleam of perfect peace. Already at 103, the vision has well-nigh faded out; at 111 the light of common day has been fairly reached, and the perilous struggle between morbid brooding and noble endurance is in danger of recommencing. Four times, at 119, 123, 125, and 126, the morbid passage reminding us of the opening phrase, knocks (*ff*) passionately for admittance, and is sternly negative by the bass. At 129, 130, 131, there is a very natural pause of brief exhaustion at *p*. At 132 the emotion is stirred, but this time less strongly; we feel that a new and more normal life is now going to open out, into which indeed we are not permitted to enter, for the Lied draws to its close. The vision of triumph has had its own chastening and purifying effect, although the

triumph of joy is evidently not near, still the restless and passionate mood of anxious brooding, which so unfits for the life that has still to be lived out, has also passed ; the last unemphatic memory of it occurs 138, not even *half* the first subject as before, is repeated only *one bar* of it, and the emotion is then left unimpassioned and suspended on a long D, the same chord for six bars, without change in treble or bass, serving to close the piece, and leaving the mind in a self-contained and reconciled, if not a happy mood, ready now to enter without harrowing pre-occupation upon the more ordinary phases and pursuits of life.

Now if music does really rouse and then take in hand and rule at its will, and thereby teach us to rule the emotions,

154. it is obvious that we are, when we hear music TRAINING OF ABSTRACT EMOTION. intelligently and sympathetically, *actually cultivating abstract habits of mind which may afterwards be transferred as trained forces to the affairs of daily life.* As the study of Euclid trains the mind in the abstract, so the study of music trains the emotions in the abstract. If you want to touch and train this emotional life, music is your all-powerful ally.

The time is not distant when this great truth will be understood and practised in connection with our toiling masses—our artisans, our poor, our labourers, our degraded denizens of back streets, cellars, and foul alleys. There are millions whose only use of the emotional life is base,

undisciplined, and degraded. Pleasure with many means crime—restraint, the real hand-maid of pleasure, is unknown ; system, order, harmony in their feelings, habits of self-control, checking the impulses, moderating and economizing the feelings, guiding them to powerful purposes and wise ends and wholesome joys—of all this our masses are chiefly ignorant ; yet if what I have maintained be true, all this music would mightily *help* to teach and to give.

I have known the oratorio of the *Messiah* draw the lowest dregs of Whitechapel into a church to hear it, and during

155. the performance sobs have broken forth from  
EFFECT OF THE the silent and attentive throng. Will anyone  
“MESSIAH” say that for these people to have their feelings  
ON THE MASSES. for once put through such a noble and long-

sustained exercise as that, could be otherwise than beneficial ? If such performances of both sacred and secular music were more frequent, we should have less drunkenness, less wife-beating, less spending of summer gains, less pauperism in winter. People get drunk because they have nothing else to do ; they beat their wives because their minds are narrow, their tastes brutal, their emotions, in a word, ill-regulated ; they spend their wages because they have no self-control, and dawdle in public-houses, where money must be spent, simply in the absence of all other resources ; and they starve in winter because they have not acquired the habit of steady work, which is impossible without steady and

wholesome recreation,—or that steady thrift and self-control which is impossible apart from disciplined emotion.

The question of music for the people will some day become a great government question. A few thousands spent on promoting bands, cheap and good, accessible and respectable, would save the country millions in poor-rates. I do not say that music will ever shut up all our prisons and workhouses, but I venture to believe that as a chief and sovereign means of rousing, satisfying, and recreating the emotions, it would go far to diminish the number of paupers and criminals. It would help them to save, it would keep them from drink, it would recreate them wholesomely, and teach them to govern their feelings—to use, and not invariably abuse, their emotions.

One Saturday afternoon I stood outside a public house, and saw the groups of men standing round the door. Those

156. that came to the door did not enter; those who

GIVE THE  
PEOPLE  
MUSIC. came forth with lighted pipes, paused; a slate-

ternly girl or two, with a ragged child in her arms; a wife who had followed her husband to look after the Saturday wages, which were going straight to the gin-shop; a costermonger with his cart drew up; the idle cabmen came across the road; even a few dirty, stone-throwing, dog-worrying boys ceased their sport; and two or three milliners' "Hands" stood still. And what was it all about? I blush for my country! A wretched cornet

with a harp, no two strings of which were in tune, the harpist trying wildly to follow “The last rose of summer” with but two chords, and always in with the wrong one. The weather was bitterly cold: the men’s hands were in their pockets, the girls shivered, but they were all taking their solace. This was the best music they could get: it seemed to soothe and refresh them. Oh, that I could have led those people to some near winter pavilion, or even a cold garden, where they could have walked about and heard a popular selection of tunes, an overture, anything, by a common but excellent German band. What good that would have done them! How they would have enjoyed it! And supposing that every Saturday they could look forward to it, admission twopence apiece, the men would be there with their wives and children; they would spend less on the whole family than they would have squandered on themselves in one drunken afternoon. They could meet their friends, have their chat and glass of ale, or cup of coffee, in the winter garden; they would go home sober; and being satisfied, recreated, having had their exercise and company, would be more likely to go to bed early than to get drunk late. Surely all this is better than boozing in public-houses.

Oh! what a vast, what a beneficent future has music in the time to come! Let its true power and use be once understood; let some one man who loves the people, and is willing to consult their tastes without pandering to them, open a promenade for the lower stratum of the population,

at a low price, on Saturday afternoon, and let us see the result. Let the musical part be under some fit and intelligent musical dictator, and let some able and sympathetic administrator, intimately and wisely in sympathy with the masses—a Miss OCTAVIA HILL—organize the refreshments, the admissions by payment, the general distribution of tickets, passes, advertisements, accommodation, &c. Let this be tried fairly—at first, of course, with an outlay of charitable funds—and then I prophesy four things :—

1. It will soon be self-supporting.
2. It will have a definite and marked influence upon the crime and intemperance of the district.
3. It will promote thrift, and increase the sum, now lamentably small, of the people's wholesome pleasures.
4. It will become a national institution, and spread in a short time throughout the length and breadth of the land.

Then shall music, ceasing to be the luxury of the rich and the degradation of the poor, open the golden gates of a wider and a happier realm of recreation for the masses. In its wake might follow, under similar management, a regenerated and popular drama, pictorial exhibitions, short and systematic lectures to groups in separate alcoves, electrical experiments, the microscope, the telescope, and a thousand other elevating and instructive *séances*—to each *séance* one halfpenny apiece, or one penny to frank for the whole.

Once get the people together by the power of music, you can mould them ; one closed chamber of their minds after another might be unlocked ; and were the scheme conducted with ability, and carefully watched, we should soon hail the dawn of a new era of popular enlightenment and genial instruction combined with an almost boundless variety of accessible, innocent, and elevating enjoyment.

157.  
THE KEY.

Third Book,



C R E M O N A .





## Third Book.

### C R E M O N A .

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#### I.

#### INTERLUDE

ON A NIGHT AT THE ROYAL INSTITUTION.

**I**T would be strange if I had not a good deal to say about the violin. The toy of my childhood—the solace of my manhood—what it will be to my old age, should I ever come to that, I cannot say. It can never be less than a happy memory, and in the hands of others—for I cannot suppose I shall ever take it up again—a recurrent delight.

The second time I was invited to fill the position of Friday evening lecturer at the Royal Institution, in February 1880, I took for my subject, “Old Violins.”

I had not thought much about the violin for several years,  
but this sudden return to my old love re-  
<sup>159.</sup> kindled my enthusiasm. Numberless fragments  
<sub>LATENT</sub> <sub>KNOWLEDGE</sub> of violin lore that I knew without having  
learned, facts that I supposed were familiar to everyone, but  
which I found few even suspected; views which seemed to  
me obvious, but which to others appeared fanciful, seemed to  
crowd upon my mind, and my great difficulty was to know  
what to select, not how many, but how few things I could  
say in my hour.

I had noticed that very great men at the Royal Institution floundered about for half-an-hour over an introduction,

<sup>160.</sup> laboured under a fatal incapacity to begin, and  
<sub>GOOD</sub> only towards the end of the hour, when it was  
<sub>ADVICE.</sub> time to leave off, really got under weigh. I  
think it was MR. BRAMWELL (since knighted), the engineer,  
next whom I happened to sit at dinner one night, who  
said to me, "If you lecture at the Royal Institution,  
don't beat about the bush, begin at once." I planned my  
lecture for three quarters of an hour, giving myself the odd  
quarter for illustration and digression. First quarter, the  
Construction; second quarter, the History; third quarter,  
the Sound of the violin. I allowed my mind to brood over  
each division, and made fragmentary notes on occasion.  
I did not so much want to acquire information as to arrange  
what I knew—give it point, edge, and a setting.

I went down and had a chat with MR. HILL, of Wardour Street, who always seemed to me quite one of the old fiddle-

161. makers *redivivus*. The sources of violin History  
PREPARATION are open to everyone in VIDAL, FÉTIS, HART,  
FOR THE ROYAL ENGEL, &c. I had used up some of these in my  
INSTITUTION. section on violins in *Music and Morals*, and as regards the Sound I thought I could rely on my own perception and experience. For two months before my lecture I lived much with great fiddles, and I had my own Cremona always with me, MR. AMHERST's very tender and delightful Nicolas Amati, as well as his venerable Gaspar violin, and MR. ENTHOVEN's famous Maggini. I took these down to the Isle of Wight, got them into condition, played upon them every day, compared them, handled them, thought about them. They kept me in the violin atmosphere, above all they kept my *eye* in. If you leave off looking at violins you soon get out of practice, you fail to see the subtle differences, you get like a tea-taster off his palate. To know fiddles and judge them you must be always looking at them. For a time, at least, I got my eye in by dwelling on the best models. I lost no opportunity of seeing great fiddles for the next two months; the DUKE OF EDINBURGH showed me his; MR. ADAM showed me his, and allowed me to see and handle the Dolphin Strad. I carefully avoided looking at any inferior violin, so that my eye might be saturated with nothing but the curves and peculiarities of the great makers.

The collection with which I was able to decorate the semicircular table of the Royal Institution on the night of my lecture, was, I should think, as a collection, *unique*. I had about twenty of the finest fiddles in the world, representing the chief makers from DUFFOPRUGCAR to BERGONZI, arranged in front of me. The DUKE OF LEINSTER's colossal Gaspar bass, now in the South Kensington Museum, lay on the floor between me and the audience. Various fantastic viols lent me by the South Kensington stood on the right and left of me, and behind me was a yellow screen on which I inscribed, with a piece of coarse charcoal, the ground plan of the great square in Cremona, showing the houses of STRADIVARIUS, the GUARNERII, and AMATI, all close to one another. Another screen behind me reached the whole length of the theatre facing the audience, and represented the violin tribe and old viols great and small. A long roll diagram with the names and dates of the chief violin makers of Italy, France, and Germany ran at the top from end to end of the wall.

The theatre was crowded. I touched from time to time a few of the instruments to illustrate peculiarities of tone.

The exquisite sweetness and freshness of the  
Dolphin "Strad." excited most admiration, and  
at the close of the lecture people crowded to  
the table to see, and, if possible, handle my gems. I dared  
not leave my post; my object was to get all the fiddles

into their cases rapidly—to allow them to be handled was no part of my programme, nor had I any permission for this from their owners. Before ever my curious hearers could get at the table, the Dolphin “Strad.” had left the theatre, and the DUKE OF EDINBURGH’s violins, one of which belonged to the EMPEROR OF RUSSIA, were both in their cases.

For a few precious days I had the guardianship of most of these gems. It was an anxious time. Some I kept in my bedroom, others in my study adjoining it, with locked doors; and even then I awoke several times each night, fancying something was wrong, and once, to satisfy myself, I got up about three o’clock in the morning and went to look at them in their cases. They were all resting quietly, more quietly than I could rest. When all the instruments were safe back in the hands of their respective owners, after the first pang at parting, I heaved a deep sigh of relief. The *Times* printed a short summary of the lecture, but I wrote it out afterwards at length for *Good Words* and I here give it *in extenso* substantially as it was delivered.

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## II.

## OLD VIOLINS.

THE Construction, the History, the Sound of the violin, would make a romantic work in three volumes as sensational as, and far more instructive than, most

<sup>164.</sup> THE WOOD. novels. The very pine-wood smells good, to begin with. The forests of the Southern Tyrol, which now teem with saplings, when the old violins were made, from 1520 to 1750, still abounded in those ancient trees, so eagerly and often vainly sought out by modern builders, and which the old viol-makers found to possess the finest acoustic properties.

The mighty timbers were felled in late summer. They came in loose floating rafts from the banks of the Garda ; they floated down the Mincio to Mantua. Brescia was in the midst of them. From Como they found their way to Milan, and from Lake Maggiore direct, *via* the Ticino and the Po, to Cremona.

What market days were those ! What a timber feast to select from ; and what cunning lovers and testers of wood were the old viol-makers, the fathers of the violin ! The rough heaps of pine, pear, lemon, and ash, beloved of the Brescians—of maple and sycamore, preferred by the Cremonese—lay steaming dry and hard in a few hours beneath the sun of the southern Alps.

Before a beam was bought, the master passed his hand over the surface. He could tell by touch the density of its fibre. Then he would take two equal slips of 165. <sup>HOW TO</sup> ~~SELECT IT.~~ deal and weigh them, and judge of their porousness. The very appearance of the wood would guide him to its probable vibrational powers. Then he would, perchance, before leaving the market, cut strips of equal length, and elicit their relative intensities by striking their tongues. He would often select for a definite purpose, looking for a soft, porous piece, or a specially hard and close-fibred grain—a certain appearance he would instinctively associate with rare acoustic properties. The seller would be eager to find the pieces, useless to other customers, invaluable to an *ANDREAS AMATI*, for he was sure that the viol-maker would buy what suited him at a long price. After the lapse of nearly two centuries, we can trace such favourite beams by peculiar stains, freckles, and grainings. When, after cutting up a dozen trees, once in two or three years a piece of fine acoustic wood was found, it was kept for the master's best work. The same pine-beam will crop up in the bellies of *Stradivarius* at an interval of years. Another can be traced in the violins of *, and after his death *CARLO BERGONZI* got hold of the remnants of it, and we detect it by a certain stain in the fibre.*

The anxiety to retain every particle of a precious piece

of wood is seen in the subtle and delicate patching and  
166. repatching of backs and bellies. The seams are  
<sup>RARE</sup> only discoverable by a microscope, so perfect is  
<sup>PROPERTIES.</sup> the cabinet work. How different from the  
modern maker at Madrid, whom TARISIO relates as having  
to repair a damaged Stradivarius, and, finding the belly  
cracked, sent it home with a brand new one of his own  
manufacture !

The properties of fine violin wood are very mysterious. Only to be surrounded by a selection of fine violins is an experience which cannot be forgotten. Sit in the room with them with your eyes shut, and, although you may not touch one of them, you will soon be aware of ghostly presences.

When I was preparing this Royal Institution lecture, I sat alone in my study the night before, surrounded by

167. that matchless collection of instruments which it

<sup>A RARE</sup> was my good fortune to exhibit the next evening  
<sup>COLLECTION.</sup> in Albemarle Street, and the chief features of  
which I desire here to place on record. Such a series of  
types, from 1520 to 1740, has seldom been seen together.  
The violins weighed but a few ounces apiece, and were  
worth thousands of pounds in value. My doors were locked ;  
no one but myself had access to that treasure house ; the  
room was kept to an even temperature night and day, and  
on the floor in a long row, placed chronologically, lay these

mystic arrangements in pine and sycamore, which were known to imprison the true souls of Brescia and Cremona.

First a Duifoprugcar of fabulous antiquity, about 1530, lent by MR. HILL; a Gaspar di Salo tenor of old Brescia, lent by MR. HART; a Maggini, DE BERIOT's favourite maker (also Brescia), lent by MR. ENTHOVEN; an Andreas Guarnerius (my own); Nicolas Amati (Cremona), MR. TYSSEN AMHERST, M.P.; a violin of the Steiner (German) school, CAPTAIN CHAMPION; a Stradivarius, the property of the late EMPEROR ALEXANDER II. of Russia, lent me by His Royal Highness the DUKE OF EDINBURGH; another fine Stradivarius, also lent me by His Royal Highness; a fine Joseph Guarnerius (Cremona), lent by MR. HART; my own labelled Stradivarius, formerly the property of COLONEL NEWBERRY; a magnificent Venetian violoncello, a Montagnana in exquisite condition; a noble Gaspar double-bass, found in the bedroom of the late TARISIO, along with his dead body and the Messie violin and other priceless gems.

On the following night, the South Kensington added to my store DRAGONETTI's monster double-bass, some exquisite ancient viols of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and MR. ADAMS lent me the Dolphin Stradivarius for which he gave £600.

In the silence of the night the room seemed full of whispers and hollow rustlings. I could not cough or move without these ghostly voices answering me, as from the catacombs of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Even

the old seasoned backs and bellies of unstrung violins are full of the strangest echoes, and MR. HILL, the violin-maker, tells me that as he sits in his work-room, where old violin carcasses are piled in hundreds on shelves and cupboards pell-mell, ribs, bellies, and backs, he constantly hears them muttering and humming to themselves, in answer to his tools, the stroke of his hammer, the sound of his voice.

Let us now look at the violin anatomically. It is a miracle of construction, and as it can be taken to pieces, put

168. together, patched, and indefinitely repaired, it is

VIOLIN almost indestructible. It is, as one may say, as

ANATOMY. light as a feather and as strong as a horse. It is composed of fifty-eight or seventy pieces of wood. Wood about as thick as a half-crown, by exquisite adjustments of parts and distribution of strain, resists for several centuries an enormous pressure. The Belly of soft deal, the Back of hard sycamore, are united by six sycamore ribs, supported by twelve blocks with linings.

It appears that the quick vibrations of the hard wood, married to the slower sound-waves of the soft, produce the mellow but reedy *timbre* of the good violin. If all the wood were hard, you would get the tone light and metallic; if all soft, it would be muffled and tubby.

There is every conceivable variety of fibre both in hard and soft wood. The thickness of back and belly is not uniform; each should be thicker towards the middle. But how thick,

and shaved thin in what proportions towards the sides? The cunning workman alone knows. As a rule, if the wood be hard he will cut it thin; if soft, thick; but *how* thin and *how* thick, and exactly *where*, is nowhere writ down, nor can be, because nowhere for handy reference are recorded the densities of all pine and pear and sycamore and maple planks that have or shall come into the maker's hands.

The Sound-bar is a strip of pine wood running obliquely under the left foot of the bridge. It not only

169. strengthens the belly for the prodigious pressure  
THE of the four strings, whose direction it is made  
SOUND-BAR. to follow, for vibrational reasons, but it is the nervous system of the violin. It has to be cut and adjusted to the whole framework; a slight mistake in position, a looseness, an inequality or roughness of finish, will produce that hollow teeth-on-edge growl called the "wolf."

It takes the greatest cunning and a life of practical study to know how long, how thick, and exactly where the sound-bar should be in each instrument. The health and *morale* of many an old violin has been impaired by its nervous system being ignorantly tampered with. Every old violin, with the exception of the "Pucelle," has had its sound-bar replaced, or it would never have endured the increased tightness of strings brought in with our modern pitch. Many good forgeries have thus been

exposed, for in taking the reputed Stradivarius to pieces, the rough clumsy work inside, contrasting with the exquisite finish of the old masters, betrays at once the coarseness of a body that never really held the soul of a Cremona.

The Sound-post, a little pine prop like a short bit of cedar pencil, is the *soul* of the violin. It is placed up-

170. right inside, about one-eighth of an inch to the

THE back of the right foot of the bridge, and through  
SOUND-POST it pass all the heart-throbs or vibrations gene-

rated between the back and the belly. There the short waves and the long waves meet and mingle. It is the material throbbing centre of that pulsating air column, defined by the walls of the violin, but propagating those mystic sound-waves that ripple forth in sweetness upon ten thousand ears.

Days and weeks may be spent on the adjustment of this tiny sound-post. Its position exhausts the patience of the repairer, and makes the joy or the misery of the player. As a rough general rule, the high-built violin will take it nearer the bridge than the low-built, and a few experiments will at once show the relation of the “soul” to tightness, mellowness, or intensity of sound. For the amateur there is but one motto, “Leave well alone.”

The prodigious strain of the strings is resisted first by the

arch of the belly ; then by the ribs, strengthened with the

171. upright blocks, the pressure amongst which is  
<sup>STRAIN OF</sup>  
<sup>STRINGS AND</sup> evenly distributed by the linings which unite  
<sup>NECK.</sup>

them ; and, lastly, by the supporting sound-bar, sound-post, and back. Many people, on observing the obvious join between the neck and the head of old violins, fancy that the *head* is not the original. It is the *neck* that is new. All the necks of old violins have thus been lengthened, and the old heads refixed, for the simple reason that CORELLI's finger-board will not do for PAGANINI, and mightier execution requires an ampler field for its eccentric excursions.

The Scroll, or head, fitted with its four simple screws of ebony, box, or rosewood, is the physiognomy of the violin.

172. At first all fiddle-heads look alike—as do all  
<sup>THE SCROLL.</sup> pug-dogs, or all negroes, and, indeed, England,

Wales, Italy, Holland, and most other countries have their general faces, so have violins,—but a practised eye sees the difference at a glance. Look for half-an-hour every day at a late Joseph Guarnerius, an early Nicolas Amati, and a grand pattern Strad., and you will be surprised that you could ever have confounded their forms. What is called the “ throwing ” of the scroll betrays the master's style like handwriting, and he lays down his type in every curve, groove, and outline. A keen eye can almost see the favourite tool he worked with, and how his hand went.

These subtleties are like the painter's "touch," they can hardly be imitated so as to deceive one who has mastered the individual work of the great makers.

The ebony finger-board must be nicely fitted, as also the neck, to the hand of the player, on its even smoothness and

true curve depends the correct stopping of the  
173. notes. You cannot, for instance, stop fifths in  
**THE FINGER-BOARD.** tune on a rough or uneven finger-board. The button to which the tail-piece is fastened is full of style, and not, like the pegs, a thing to be dropped and changed at will; it is a critical part of the violin, takes a good third of the leverage of the whole strain, is fixed like a vice, rooted in the very adamant of the wood, carefully finished, and cut round, pointed, or flat, according to the taste of the maker.

The Purfling, more or less deeply embedded, emphasizes the outline of the violin. It is composed of three thin

174. strips of wood, ebony, sometimes whalebone, the  
THE centre of two white strips; it is often more or  
**PURFLING.** less embedded, and betrays the workman's taste and skill. The double purfling and purfling in eccentric patterns of some of the old violins is very quaint, but a doubtful adjunct to the tone. But, strange to say, prior to 1600, appearances were more thought of than tone. The old guitars and viols are often so profusely carved or inlaid

with tortoiseshell, ivory, and silver, that they have but little sound, and that bad. I do not think that this has ever been noticed before, but it is undoubtedly a fact that attention to tone only dates from the rise of the violin proper in the sixteenth century, and is, in fact, coincident with the rise of the art of modern music.

I come now to the Cremona varnish. What is it? About 1760 it disappeared, and never reappeared. All the Cre-

monas have it. Was it a gum or an oil, or a

<sup>175.</sup> THE VARNISH. distillation from some plant, or some chemical

once largely in use and superseded, as the old oil lamps have gone out before gas and paraffine? How was it mixed? Is the recipe lost? No one seems to be able to answer these questions definitely. There it lies like sunlit water, mellow, soft, rich; varying in colour —golden, orange, or pale red tint on the Guarnerius! rich gold, deep orange, or light red on the Stradivarius back—and when it rubs softly away rather than chips off hardly, like the German and French imitations, it leaves the wood seasoned, impregnated, and fit to resist heat, cold, and the all-destroying worm for ages. MR. CHARLES READE gives one account of the matter. He thinks the wood, cut in winter, varnished in the hot summer months, was first bathed several times in oil; thus, he says, were the “pores of the wood filled, and the grain shown up.” The oil held in solution some clear gum. “Then

upon this oil varnish, when dry, was laid some heterogeneous varnish, namely a solution in spirit of some sovereign, high-coloured, pellucid, and, above all, tender gum." These gums were reddish yellow and yellowish red, and are accredited with colouring the varnish. On the other hand, it must be stated that, although the difficulties in the amber theory are great, Mr. PERKINS, the eminent chemist, has discovered amber in the varnish of JOSEPH GUARNERIUS, and he believes the colouring to be derived from a herb common throughout Piedmont, and, following out his conviction, MR. PERKINS has made a varnish which certainly does resemble very closely the Cremonese hue and gloss. Dod, who died in 1830, professed to have got the Cremona recipe, and whilst employing JOHN LOTT and BERNARD FENDT to make his violins, always varnished them himself; and, indeed, his varnish is very superior, and his violins are highly prized; but perhaps in a general description like this to discuss further the varnish theory would be superfluous.

The Bridge of the violin is to many a true Asses' Bridge; you may try and try again, and its true position will still

be represented by an unknown  $x$ . It is but

176.  
**THE BRIDGE.** a small piece of hard boxwood, 2 inches by  $1\frac{1}{2}$  in size, it is quaintly perforated, it clings closely to the violin's belly with its two little thin feet, is about as thick, where thickest, as a five-shilling piece, thinning steadily towards the top, which obeys the curve

of the finger-board and lifts the strain of the four strings. The bridge is movable; but it is so important and all-essential to the propagation of any sound at all, that it may be called the wife of the violin. All old violins have had many bridges in their time, but there is no reason why the union, if happy, should not last for forty or fifty years. A perfectly harmonious marriage is as rare between violins and their bridges as it is between men and women, though in either case there is a considerable margin for the gradual adjustment of temperaments. Although the old violin is very capricious in his choice, and often remains a widower for years, he does not object to elderly bridges, and when he finds one he can get on with, will obstinately resent any rash interference with the harmony of his domestic arrangements.

This is a point not nearly enough considered even by wise violin doctors and repairers. The heartless substitu-

177. *tion of raw young bridges for old and tried*

THE SENTIMENT OF THE BRIDGE. *companions is common and much to be deplored,*

*and a sensitive old Strad. will never cease to spar with the fresh, conceited, wayward young things, utterly incapable of entering into his fine qualities, and caring naught for his two hundred years of tonal experience; and the jarring and bickering go on until he gets rid of one after another and settles down, if not with his old favourite, at least with some elderly and fairly dessicated*

companion. I do not believe in bridges being worn out. After a year or two the hard box-fibre yields very little under the cutting of the strings; there is a considerable margin for the shifting of the strings, and no string but the first will materially grind. Rather than change so precious a thing as a congenial partner, glue, mend, patch, repair her, just as you would her priceless old husband; if he is in the prime of life at about one hundred and fifty, she may well be a little made up at sixty or seventy. Thirty years ago my Stradivarius, 1712, grand pattern, came by gift into my possession. I soon found it did not get on with its bridge—a new, sappy, crude, thick thing, which seemed to choke and turn sour its mellow vibrations. About that time I received the present of a very old bridge from the violin of F. CRAMER. It was delicate, exquisitely finished, evidently very old. I thought its build too slight, but clapped it on at once, and the old violin waked as out of a long sleep, like a giant refreshed with wine. It was then some time before I found exactly the right place, and for several years, on and off, I fidgeted about with the bridge. One day, in shifting it, I snapped it; but after trying other bridges, I glued the old one together, and once more the violin found its old sweetness and solace. Years passed, I left off playing, the Strad. lay neglected, got damp, and its joints loosened. I lent it to a cunning doctor; he “fixed it up” again, but sent it back with a new bridge, and sounding—well, like files and vinegar! I recovered the old bridge that he declared

now worn out. I restored it to its beloved husband, now only in his one hundred and seventy-first year, he received his lost wife with effusion, and I think the harmony made by the two was never more perfect than it is now. Truly *amantium* not *iræ*, but *separatio amoris integratio est*.

A word about violin strings. The positive thickness of the strings depends upon the temperament and build of

178. the violin, providing that the player's fingers are  
VIOLIN equal to thick or thin strings. Thick strings  
STRINGS, will mellow the screaminess of a Stainer—  
elicit the full tone of a Joseph Guarnerius or grand Strad.,  
whilst the older violins of Brescia, and even the sweet  
Nicolas Amati, will work better with thinner strings;  
but in such matters the player must come to the best  
compromise he can with his fingers and his fiddle, for  
the finger will often desire a thin string when the fiddle cries  
out for a thick one. New violins as a rule will take thicker  
strings than the fine old sensitives of the sixteenth or  
seventeenth centuries. Of the English, French, German,  
and Italian strings, the Italian are the best; and of the  
Italian, the Roman hard and brilliant, a little rough, and  
Neapolitan smooth, soft, and pale are preferred. Paduans  
are strong, but frequently false. Veronese are softer and  
deeper in colour. The Germans now rank next, and the  
white smooth Saxon strings are good substitutes for, but no  
rivals of, the Italians. The French firsts are brittle, the

Italian strings sound well, and the French patent fourth silver string, perfectly smooth and shining, is preferred by some soloists to the old covered fourth. The English strings, of a dirty green and yellow colour, are very strong, and good enough for hack work in the orchestra. The best and strongest strings are made from the intestines of spring lambs killed in September, and the superiority of the Italian over others is explained by the climate, for in Italy the sun does what has to be done artificially in more northern latitudes.

The demand for the interior of the September lamb  
179. being out of all proportion to the supply, there  
HOW TO  
CHOOSE  
STRINGS. is a vast sale of inferior strings always going on  
at high prices. In string selection the objects  
are three:—

1. To suit the constitution of your instrument, and choose that thickness and quality of string which will develop tone with the greatest ease, roundness, and freedom.
2. To choose strings which will give good fifths—a matter sometimes a little dependent on the shape of your own fingers and the cut of your finger-board, but also controlled by the relative thickness of your strings.
3. To avoid false strings—an epidemic which rages incontinently amongst E violin strings—SPOHR's recipe for detection was to hold the string between the fingers and

thumbs, and if when he set it vibrating from one end to the other only two lines appeared, he decided that it was true ; if a third, it was deemed false. Once on, however, there can never be any doubt.

It is only necessary to glance at the enormous variety of shapes that the viol tribe has assumed, both before

180. and after the creation of the violin, to judge

<sup>VIOLIN</sup>  
<sup>FASCINATION.</sup> of the inexhaustible dominion which the conception seems to have exercised over the human mind. The collector who cannot play, and the player who cannot collect, are alike victims of this mania for violins. Of what interest can they be to the collector, who keeps dozens of them, unstrung and unmended, in cupboards and cabinets, and shows them about to his bewildered guests like old pots or enamels ?

Look at a fine specimen or two, on and off, when you have the chance, and the mystery may possibly dawn upon you too.

There, in a small compass, lies before you such a wonder of simplicity, subtlety, variety, and strength as perhaps no other object of equal dimensions can possess. The eye is arrested by the amber gloss and glow of the varnish ; the infinite grace of the multitudinous curves ; the surface, which is nowhere flat, but ever in flowing lines, sunlit hollows of miniature hills and vales, irregular, like the fine surface of a perfectly healthy human body ; its gentle mounds and

depressions would almost make us believe that there is a whole underlying system of muscle—a very living organism, to account for such subtle yet harmonious irregularity of surface. It is positively alive with swelling and undulating grace.

Then the eye follows with unabating ardour the outline—dipping in here or bulging there—in segments of what look like an oval or a circle, but which are never any part of an oval or a circle—but something drawn unmechanically like a Greek frieze—after the vision of an inward grace.

Its voice may be as fair as its form and finish; yet unstrung and silent, more truly can it be said of a violin than of any human creature, that “it is a thing of beauty and a joy for ever,” for its beauty grows with the mellowness of age; its voice is sweeter as the centuries roll on, and its physical frame appears to be almost indestructible.

And the player—who is not always a judge of a genuine violin, but goes by the sound qualities which suit him—he naturally adores what is, within its limits, scientifically the most perfect of all instruments.

The four strings, of course, limit and define its harmonic resources—in combination and viewed collectively in the quartet alone is it able to compass the extended developments of harmony in bass, tenor, and treble clef, but as a tone-producing instrument it has no rival. It possesses *accent* combined with *sustained and modified tone*. The piano has accent, but little sustained and no modified tone;

the organ has accent, and sustained, but in a very imperfect sense, modified tone ; the violin possesses in perfection all three. With the stroke of the bow comes every degree of *accent* ; with the drawing and skilful *sostenuto* of up and down bowings the notes are indefinitely *sustained* to a degree far exceeding the capacity of the human lungs ; whilst every pulse of emotion is through the pressure of the finger communicated to the vibrating string, and the tone trembles, shivers, thrills, or assumes a hard, rigid quality, passing at will from the variety of a whisper to a very roar or scream of agony or delight.

Can the soul of the musician fail to yield loving or utter allegiance to the sovereign power of the violin, which is so willing and ideal a minister of his subtlest inspirations—equal to the human voice in sensibility and expression, and far superior to it in compass, execution, variety, and durability ?

The violin is not an invention, it is a growth. It is the survival of the fittest. The undeveloped elements of the

181. *genus Viol*, out of which grew the *species Violin*,  
VIOLIN HISTORY. are to be found latent in the rebek, the crowth,  
and the rottta. In the struggle for existence each succumbed, leaving only its useful and vital elements to be recombined.

The *rebek* bequeathed its rounded form pierced in the belly with two sound-holes, the bridge, tail-piece, screw-box, doubtless a sound-post, and that odd crook of a violin-

bow often seen in the hands of stone angels in cathedrals of the fourteenth century.

The *crowth* gives the all-important hint of the two vibrating boards joined by ribs; whilst from the *rotta*, or guitar tribe, comes the lower end, and the upper end comes from the rebek—the elongated neck separate from the body, the frets, which for one hundred and fifty years delayed the advent of the violin, and the two concave side-curves so needful for the manipulation of the bow. *Music and Morals* contains diagrams illustrating the genesis of the violin.

This Viol—of no particular size or settled shape, or rather of all shapes and sizes, usually with a flat back and round belly—was made in great profusion in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Anyone who will glance at the case of ancient viols in the South Kensington Museum will be surprised at the fancy and fertility of form displayed.

There was the Knee Viol, the Bass Viol, the Viol di Gamba, the Violone, and the Viol d'Amore. Some of these

182. were inlaid with tortoiseshell and ivory, others

<sup>AN</sup>  
~~ELIZABETHAN~~  
VIOLIN. elaborately carved and over-purfled—facts most interesting to the connoisseur, and marking a period when *cabinet-work* was at its zenith and *musical sound* in its infancy. Sound was the carver's humble servant. The well-known violin given by QUEEN ELIZABETH to the EARL OF LEICESTER, riddled through and through like Ceylonese furniture or a Chinese ivory junk, is quite

absurd as a sound vehicle. By and by the carver and fine cabinet-worker would have to place all the treasures of their art at the disposal of music, and would not be allowed one join, or purple, or pattern inimical to tone. I shall develop these hints later.

The variety and number of strings in these old Viols is often childish. It looks like (what it was) playing with

183.      newly-discovered resources—the real wealth of

THE NUMBER which it took two hundred years more to learn.  
OF STRINGS.

If in bowed instruments you have more strings than fingers the hand with difficulty overlays them—of course in the guitar tribe the work is divided between ten fingers instead of four. In the Viol d'Amore an odd attempt was made to improve the *timbre* by a set of steel wires tuned sympathetically, and running beneath the gut strings. It took two hundred years to convince people that the *timbre* lay with the wood, not the wires; nor could the old masters see that tone would only arrive with an extended study in the properties of wood and a radical change of model.

I showed some years ago in the *Contemporary Review* what it is difficult to trace step by step, but what we know

184.      must have been the history of the violin tribe

VIOLIN      EVOLUTION.      in its earlier stages. I placed the lesson for the eye—showing how the smaller viols or violettes of the seventeenth century fell into the violins,

the larger ones into the Tenor, and the Viol di Gambas into the Violoncello. The double-bass, a genuine Viol, and the only one which retains its flat back, was made extensively by GASPAR DI SALO, and has been entirely adopted by the modern orchestra; indeed whilst innumerable other large viols are merely preserved as curiosities, the double-bass retains its ancient type, and in the BEETHOVEN and WAGNERIAN orchestra exercises an influence and prominence second only to the violin itself.

As we look intently at the confused nebulæ of sixteenth-century viols, we notice the modest constellation of the violins slowly detaching itself from that host of tubby stars which it was soon destined to supersede for ever. The rise of the violin tribe—by which of course I mean the *violin*, *tenor*, *violoncello*, and *double bass*—is, in fact, coincident with the rise of modern music. A definite art required a definite instrument—more mechanical, more constant, more reliable than the human voice.

Between CARISSIMI, 1570, and MONTEVERDE, 1672, the foundations of the art of modern music were laid by the

185.      discovery of the perfect cadence and the modern  
THE VOICE      octave. With a system of fixed tonality the  
AND THE      art began those strides of progress which in  
VIOLIN.      about two hundred years seemed to leave nothing new to  
be discovered. It first recast and used the human voice.  
The voice was noticed to fall naturally into treble, alto,

tenor, and bass, and was so organized in the singing schools of PISTOCCHI at Bologna in 1659.

Now the chief of the AMATI worked from 1596-1684, and the division of violin, viola, violoncello and double-bass corresponded with tolerable closeness to the four divisions of the human voice, the rise of singing-schools, and the exigencies of the new musical art. The Procrustean bed upon which the poor viols of the period were now stretched forms one of the most interesting and instructive episodes in the history of the art. Viol di Gambas were converted into violoncellos, the viollettes enlarged and patched into violins, viols cut down—sadly, brutally cut down—into tenors. No lover of the art could help dropping a tear over a matchless specimen of LINARELLI in 1400-1500, exhibited at South Kensington, which had been so cut down; and I could point to one or two viols now passing as Amati tenors which have received similar treatment and strut in borrowed plumes. The cabinet work is often so fine that only an experienced eye with the aid of a microscope can discern the joins and refittings beneath the new wash of dirty-brown varnish habitually used to conceal the deed. But all this only proves the imperative fitness of a new combination. We have at last arrived at the modern violin, and the reason of its natural supremacy. Its right to survive is clearly to be found in its perfect ministry to

186.

TRANS-  
FOR-  
MATION.

the art of modern music. I have dwelt upon its compass, which is to all intents and purposes unlimited, and its other especial merits are not far to seek.

The number and the tension of the strings is the happy mean between the one or two strings of the Japanese or

187. Persian fiddle and the many-stringed viol. Add

FOUR STRINGS. a fifth string to the violin and the tension is

not only too great, but unnecessary, for the E string will yield sound as shrill as the human ear can bear ; add a string on the other side, and the tension will be too feeble to yield a good quality of sound. And similar remarks may apply to the tenor, violoncello, and double-bass ; each is sufficient and complete, and where it ends its companion steps in to continue the varied function.

Each is distinct and full of character ; the charm of variety is constitutionally involved. In each the strings are of different thicknesses, with different tensions, acting upon different vibrating surfaces, enclosing different-sized columns of air.

We pause for a moment with feelings of profound satisfaction and survey the violin kingdom of the past. This fourfold valuable selection—this crowning of violin, tenor, violoncello, and double-bass—has not been the work of any one man or age, or even country ; it is the inexorable, empirical, yet logical outcome or evolution of thousands of experiments made in France, Germany, and Italy, by

hundreds of workers, extending over centuries of time, and resulting in the survival of the fittest.

Although DUFFOPRUGCAR was certainly not an Italian, yet, coming from the Tyrol, he settled at Bologna, after-

188. wards migrating to Lyons, in France, where he  
THE ITALIAN SCHOOLS. spent most of his life and died. He was un-

1520-1760. DUFFOPRUG- doubtlessly one of the fathers, if not the father,  
CAR. of the violin. It has been questioned whether

DUFFOPRUGCAR ever made violins, but there is no reason for doubting that PALESTRINA played on a Duiffoprugcar violin, which is said to have borne this couplet :—

Viva fui in sylvis, sum dura occisa securi  
Dum vixi tacui mortua dulce cano.

There is, besides, a large-sized violin bearing date 1539, said to be the only extant specimen; but lately, MR. HILL obtained from Lyons a very excellent and perfect specimen, which he believed to be an undoubted Duiffoprugcar, and which I exhibited at the Royal Institution. It is quaint, undecided, and antique in outline, the S's curiously cut, and the back over-purfled. When opened it was found backed with old canvas and oddly primitive in construction. It ought to be put under a glass-case in the South Kensington Museum. Indeed it is incredible, but true, that not a single museum in Europe that I know of has thought it worth while to procure specimens of the violin art from DUFFOPRUGCAR to BERGONZI.

But it is not to Bologna or Lyons, but to Brescia, that we must look for the rise of the first great violin school.

Note first GASPAR DI SALO, who worked between 1550 and 1612. It has been my privilege to live for some

189. weeks with MR. AMHERST's fine old Gaspar THE BRESCIAN SCHOOL di Salo. He was in splendid condition, still

1520-1620. bulgy, but a notable and significant reduction

GASPAR DI SALO. from the old viol type, which GASPAR doubtless

continued to make. The head is charmingly long and queer and antique. The idea of putting character and great finish into the scroll belongs to a later period. Human and animal heads were no doubt common enough in the place of a scroll; but they belong to the carving, cabinet-decoration, over-purfling period, when tone was second to ornament.

As the great tone period approached, carving for the sake of carving was abandoned; ornament was kept simple,

190. subordinate, but full of finish and avowedly the

VIOLIN CARVING. mark of sign-manual. The exquisite, yet unpretending and simple, scrolls of AMATI and

STRADIVARIUS arose along with the rise of violin tone. But why such finish, such evident intention to be noticed, such distinct *cachet* and appeal to the eye? I think this is the natural explanation. As the art of violin-playing improved, violinists took to holding their fiddles well up, and to playing without notes; the head of the violin was thus

the first thing which caught the eye; whereas before there is every reason to believe that the old viol players held their instruments down, like bad orchestral players now, with violin scroll or head almost between their knees and *unseen*. That head might, indeed, be a finely-carved human head; but, if so, it could only be seen as an ornament when the violin was hanging up; it could only be seen, if at all, upside down when the violin was being played. Look at all old violins; they are rubbed by the beard on *both* sides. Now we never place the chin on the off-side—always on the in-side; but if a man has to crouch in dim churches over flickering oil lamps and scrape old chaunts, he will get slovenly, his violin-head will droop between his knees, and his chin will most naturally slip over the tail-piece and lie on the off-side, whilst his ear reposes on the tail-piece, and the top of his violin has a tendency to disappear over his left shoulder!

Compare this old slovenly method—inimical to tone, to style, to execution, and to grace—which buried the scroll—with the noble, upright pose of JOACHIM or NERUDA when playing, where the scroll is constantly thrown up, as if itself addressing the audience, and instead of looking upside-down or ungraceful, as would a human or animal head in that position, comes out towards you like the prow of an ancient galley, and impresses upon the eye, with every motion of the player's wrist, its fine *verve* and individual character.

GASPAR DI SALO may almost be said to have invented violin tone. Mr. TYSSEN AMHERST's unique early Gaspar

191. violin, with its long, pointed *f*-like black-letter <sup>A FAMOUS GASPAR DESCRIBED.</sup> sound-holes, although of the high model abandoned in later life, is surprising in tone, considering its build, which is generally supposed to favour a smothered and tubby sound. Although the first and fourth strings are rather rough, the whole is very sonorous and fresh, and the D and A strings very rich and pure. We must not look for the finish of the Amatis at this early period. The build of this early Gaspar is round and full, both in back and belly, and the chisel has gone wrong more than once in the back grooving, whilst the purfling is not good. Probably one and the same cunning workman has repaired the purfling in places, patched the head, and positively mosaiced the worn-out screw-box, and, alas! carried a brown varnish over several parts of the instrument, through which the rich golden tints of GASPAR still peep, and almost dazzle the eye. Still, whoever has put on the new neck has worshipped at the shrine of old GASPAR; he has made his purfling a little too good, left a little too much of his glue and his brown varnish; but his patched head is such a masterpiece, such care and labour to keep every line of GASPAR—except on one side of the screw-box, where about two inches of line is new—but the join so good as only to be seen under a microscope.

All this, when one lives with a fiddle, one gets to notice

and to love, whilst the uninitiated, standing by in bewilderment, may well feel tempted to order the violin and the connoisseur off to the nearest lunatic asylum.

MAGGINI (GIOVANNI PAOLO), 1590-1640, of Brescia, followed GASPAR, but carried farther the art of rich, clear tone.

It is the glory of the Brescians to have hit upon  
192. this secret, lost as soon as found, that for tone  
G. P. MAGGINI.—good round tone—the belly and back must be brought down flatter upon ribs of diminished height. MAGGINI's violins, though lacking in some of the quaint grace of GASPAR (especially his double-basses), approach the perfected Cremona model of the later rather than the earlier days; his scroll is grooved and finished; his sound-holes are still the long black-letter SS; the varnish rich brown or yellow. He is often confounded with BARAK NORMAN, or, still worse, with any obscure German imitator who has chosen to a little over-purflé and inlay his back. The Brescians MARIANI, VENTURINI, BUDIANI, MATEO BENTE, cannot further be alluded to here; in time they will all be treasured more as antiquities than as tone masters.

The hotter suns and splendid river supplying the fine  
193. wood-market, and the commercial prosperity  
THE CREMONA SCHOOL. enjoyed by Cremona, seem now to have attracted  
1550-1740. and fixed the manufacture of the violin; and there was now a growing demand, not only from all

the churches but also throughout the palaces of Italy. We must ever view that central square of Cremona, where stood the Church of St. Dominic, with feelings of the deepest interest. Standing opposite the façade on our right hand lies the house of the AMATI ; there worked ANDREW, the founder of the school, making, in 1550, close copies of the Brescians, GASPAR and MAGGINI.

There were the boys, ANTHONY and JEROME, who afterwards made jointly those violins so much sought after ; but oddly enough reverted to the tubbier model, and over-grooved the sides of their bellies and backs, thinning their tone, until the genius of JEROME discerned the error and reverted to the Brescian type.

<sup>194.</sup>  
THE AMATI. Here was born the great NICOLAS AMATI, 1596–1684, who struck out his own model, flattened, and in his best time scarcely retaining a trace of the vicious side-groove of the earlier Amatis.

On the same work-bench, as students in the school of the immortal NICOLAS, sat ANDREW GUARNERIUS and the incomparable STRADIVARIUS, finishing their master's violins and copying for years his various models with supreme skill and docility.

Almost next door, probably on the death of NICOLAS AMATI, STRADIVARIUS set up his shop, opposite the west

front of the big church; there for fifty years more he  
195. worked with uninterrupted assiduity; and next  
THE GUAR-  
NERII AND  
STRADIVARIUS. door to him the family of the GUARNERII had  
their work-rooms, and in that little square were  
all the finest violins made in the short space of about one  
hundred and fifty years. The body of STRADIVARIUS lies  
in the Church of the Rosary, not a stone's-throw from  
his own house; and so these great men died, and were  
buried, working in friendly rivalry, and leaving their echoes  
to roll from pole to pole.

I have a delicate ANDREW GUARNERIUS of 1665, which  
shows admirably the transition between the full form of the  
earlier Amatis and the superior flat model of NICOLAS  
AMATI.

It was made, doubtless, under the eye of NICOLAS, and  
perhaps criticised by STRADIVARIUS, who probably worked at  
the same bench and shared ANDREW's glue-pot.

In my ANDREW GUARNERIUS the drooping Brescian  
corners have vanished, and the lower angles are turned  
up sharp; but the middle lengths fail to attain the  
pleasantly balanced curves and the graceful upper width  
and freedom of MR. AMHERST's later Nicolas Amati, of  
1676, a true gem, despite the apparent plainness of the  
back.

ANDREW GUARNERIUS has also quite got rid of the rough,  
coarse, thick Brescian S, which was always ugly and too  
wide, and in its place the eye is rejoiced to find a lovely

and delicately rounded S, unlike at top and bottom, but only a shade less graceful than the freehand writing of NICOLAS himself.

The great NICOLAS (1596–1684) began to change his model, reverting to the later Brescian in all but his sound-

holes and two curves, about 1625. His violins  
196. increased in size, and would have increased in  
THE GREAT NICOLAS. power, had it not been for a remnant of the early Amati side-grooving, which is said to thin the tone. The dip from the foot of the bridge is thought to be too great, but the upper part of the grand pattern is truly noble. Some of his scrolls have been criticised as too small and contracted, but there is nothing of this in a 1676 specimen before me; and although the corners are pointed and highly elegant, there is nothing weak; yet the whole is full of feminine grace.

The varnish, when not as is usual rubbed off, inclines to light orange with clear golden tints. The tone is so sweet and sensitive that it seems to leap forth before the bow has touched the strings, and goes on like a bell long after the bow has left them. To a fine Joseph Guarnerius you have sometimes to lay siege and then you are rewarded, but the Nicolas Amati is won almost before it is wooed.

The incomparable ANTONIUS STRADIVARIUS, or STRADI-

VARI, lived between 1644–1737. His latest known violin bears date 1736, and mentions his age, ninety-  
<sup>197.</sup> two. He worked without haste and without  
STRADIVARIUS. rest. His life was interrupted only by the siege of Cremona in 1702. But his art knew no politics, and the foreign courts of Spain and France were quite as eager to get his violins as the GOVERNOR OF CREMONA, or the DUKE OF MODENA.

Up to about 1668 he was simply the apprentice of NICOLAS; we find scrolls and sound-holes cut by the pupil on the master's violins. He even made and labelled for NICOLAS.

In 1668 he leaves his master's shop and sets up for himself. But for thirty years this consummate student, whilst making every conceivable experiment with lutes, guitars, and violins, practically copied closely the best models of NICOLAS AMATI.

Still we notice that from 1686–1694 his sound-holes begin to recline, his form grows flatter, his curves extended, his corners tossed up and pointed, the scroll bolder, varnish inclining away from the browns and light orange to the rich yellows and light reds. Notice the way in which his purfling at the corners, like a little curved wasp's sting, follows no outline of the violin, and is not in the middle of the angle, but points freely towards the *corner* of the angle. What *chic*! as the French say.

In 1687 the master makes his long pattern—not really

longer, but *looking* longer because of the contracted sides. The Spanish Quatuor, inlaid with ivory, illustrates the fancy and skill of the workman—as did also an exquisitely carved lute by STRADIVARIUS, exhibited at the South Kensington Museum.

It was not until STRADIVARIUS had entered upon his fifty-sixth year that he attained his zenith and fixed his model, known as the grand pattern.

Between 1700 and 1725 those extraordinary creations passed from his chisel, even as the master-pieces on canvas passed from the brush of RAPHAEL.

The finest of these specimens—like that possessed by MR. ADAMS, the Dolphin, and by MR. HART, the Betts Strad.—fetch from £300 to £1,000.

To try and describe these instruments is like trying to describe the pastes, glazes, and blues of Nankin China.

198. Beneath the tangible points of outline, scroll,  
A SPECIMEN character, and variety of thickness and modifica-  
DETAIL. tion of form, dependent on qualities of wood known to the master, there lie still the intangible things which will hardly bear describing, even when the violin is under the eye—one might almost say under the microscope. A rough attempt by contrast may be made in detail. Take but one detail for the benefit of the general reader, the inner *side curves* and angles of the middle boughs.

In GASPAR and MAGGINI those curves are drooping at the corners, longish and undecided in character; in DUFFOPRUGCAR it amounts almost to a wriggle. NICOLAS AMATI balances the top and bottom of his hollow curve with a certain mastery, but it still has a long oval sweep, with a definite relation of balance between the top and the bottom angle. Having mastered this sweep, STRADIVARIUS begins to play with his curves and angles. He feels strong enough to trifle, like a skilled acrobat, with the balance. He lessens the oval, and tosses up his lower corner with a curious little crook at the bottom; the top angle towers proudly and smoothly above it, yet it is always graceful—delicious from its sense of freedom, almost insolent in its strength and self-confidence. There is a touch about STRADIVARIUS here as elsewhere; it is that which separates the great masters everywhere from their pupils—RAPHAEL from GIULIO ROMANO, PAGANINI from SIVORI, STRADIVARIUS from CARLO BERGONZI. The freedom of STRADIVARIUS becomes license in CARLO BERGONZI and over-boldness in JOSEPH GUARNERIUS; for, although the connection between JOSEPH and STRADIVARIUS has been questioned, to my mind it is sufficiently clear.

Although STRADIVARIUS made down to the last year of

his life, still after 1730, feeling his hand and

199.

THE END OF sight beginning to fail, he seldom signed his STRADIVARIUS. work. We can catch one, and only one, glimpse

of him as he [lived and moved and had his being at Cremona in 1730, Piazza Domenico. Old POLLEDRO, late chapel-master at Turin, describes "ANTONIUS, the lute-maker," as an intimate friend of his master. He was high and thin, and looked like one worn with much thought and incessant industry. In summer he wore a white cotton night-cap, and in winter one of some woollen material. He was never seen without his apron of white leather, and every day was to him exactly like every other day. His mind was always riveted upon his one pursuit, and he seemed neither to know nor to desire the least change of occupation. His violins sold for four golden livres apiece, and were considered the best in Italy; and as he never spent anything except upon the necessaries of life and his own trade, he saved a good deal of money, and the simple-minded Cremonese used to make jokes about his thriftiness, and the proverb passed, "As rich as STRADIVARIUS."

A traveller who lately visited his house, still standing in the square of Cremona, remarked that it was heated through with the sun like an oven. He said you might sit and sweat there as in a Turkish bath. That was how the Cremona makers dried their wood, and so it was their oils distilled slowly and remained always at a high temperature, their varnish weltered and soaked into the pine bellies and sycamore backs beneath the tropical heat of those seventeenth century summers !

JOSEPH ANTHONY GUARNERIUS DEL GESU <sup>+</sup>  
IHS (1687–1745)

towers a head and shoulders above the other illustrious GUARNERII, viz. ANDREW and JOSEPH,  
200. THE GREAT his sons, PETER, brother of JOSEPH (*son*), PETER JOSEPH. OF MANTUA, son of “JOSEPH *Filius ANDREÆ*.”

The loud and rich tone of the later Joseph del Gesu violins makes him the formidable rival of STRADIVARIUS. PAGANINI preferred his Joseph, now in the Municipal Palace of Genoa, to all others.

Who was JOSEPH’s master? The idea that JOSEPH, or anyone who lived either in AMATI’S or GUARNERIUS’S house—AMATI on the right, GUARNERIUS on the left of STRADIVARIUS, in the same square at Cremona—was entirely unaffected by the great man’s influence, has always seemed to me absurd. That influence has been denied as vehemently in late years as it used to be formerly taken for granted. Still, the great JOSEPH is claimed as the pupil of JOSEPH, son of ANDREW—that ANDREW who sat by the side of STRADIVARIUS in NICOLAS AMATI’S workshop. With this I find no fault; but if the influence of STRADIVARIUS cannot be seen in the earlier Josephs, the later Josephs show undoubted signs of the master, who between 1700 and 1730 had eclipsed all his predecessors. In some details JOSEPH’s undoubted reversion to Brescian influence, and that early, is interesting—the flat model, the long sound-holes, and, it must be added, often the rough work.

Still, in JOSEPH's middle period there occurs that very high finish which reminds one of STRADIVARIUS. The elegance of the Strad. scroll is never attained, perhaps not even aimed at. The Josephs of about 1740 are most in request. They are large and massively made, the wood of finest acoustic property, the Brescian sound-hole toned down and rounded more like STRADIVARIUS. A fine genuine violin of this period will not go for less than two hundred guineas, and four hundred would not be an out-and-out price. The GUARNERIUS head or scroll is often quaint and full of self-assertion. The violin has the strongest make, temper, and stamp ; the fourth string is often as rich as a trumpet. His last period is troubled by certain inferior violins called prison fiddles. The tale runs that JOSEPH was imprisoned for some political offence, and was supplied with refuse wood by the gaoler's daughter. The prison fiddle is a boon to forgers ; their bad fiddles pass freely for interesting "prison JOSEPHS."

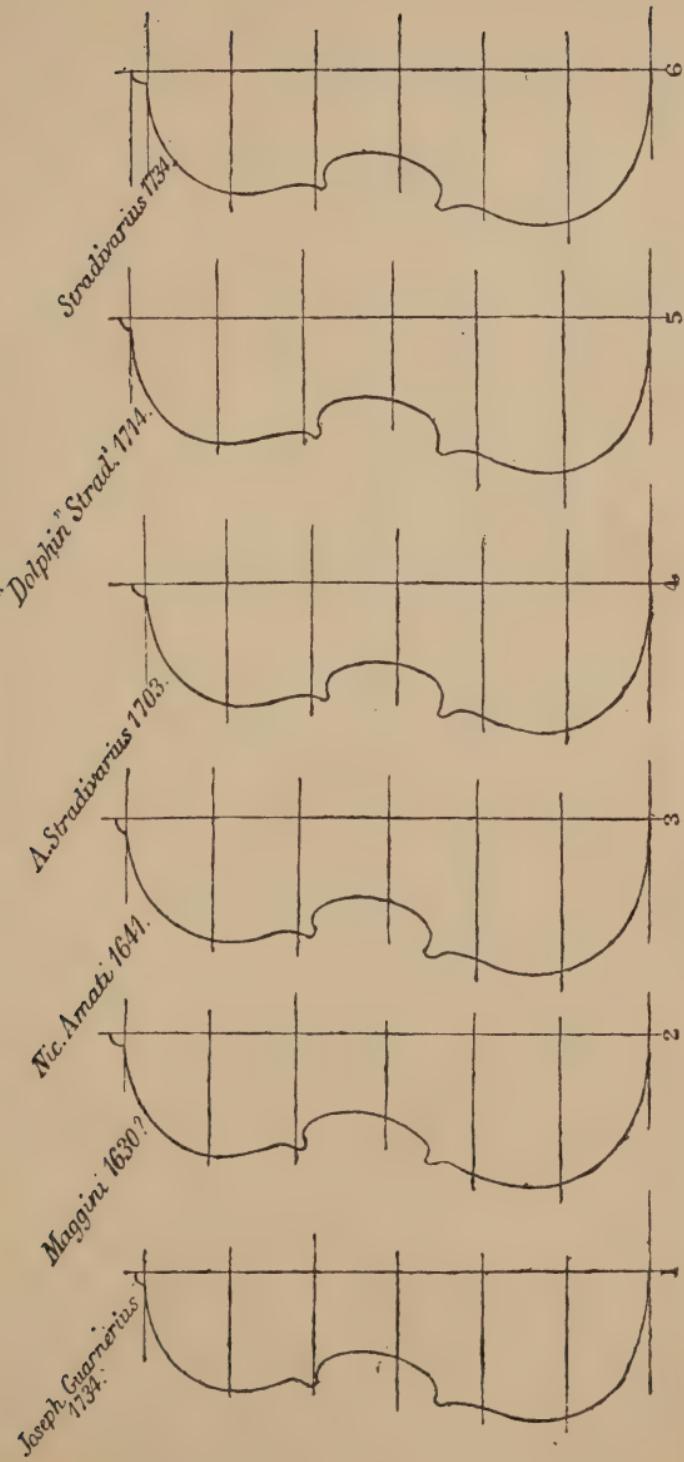
With CARLO BERGONZI (1718-1755) and GUADAGNINI (1710-1750) the great Cremona school comes to an end.

201. The very varnish disappears, the cunning in

THE END OF THE CREMONESE SCHOOL. wood-selection seems to fail the pale reflectors of a dying art, and the passion for vigour and

finish has also departed. If I have in the above remarks omitted great names like RUGERIUS, CAPPA, ALBANI, MONTAGNANA (Cremona and Venice)

CREMONA VIOLINS.





I am dealing with characteristics more than with men, and have used my men, not in catalogue, but as landmarks in art. As the greatest masters grow rare, the secondary stars cannot fail to rise annually in value.

The violin, although it culminated, is not exhausted at Cremona; but it would lead me into a new branch of my

202. subject to deal with the other schools. These,

*FLORENCE,  
BOLOGNA,  
ROME.* after all, are but reflections, more or less pale or perfect, of the incomparable Cremonese masters.

Florence, Bologna and Rome (1680–1760) may be briefly summarised under the names of **GABRIELLI**, F.; **TONONI**, B.; and **TECHLER**, R. Venice (1690–1764) claims **D. MORTAGNANA** (famous for his violoncellos), and **SANCTUS SERAPHINO**. Naples (1680–1800) boasts of the families of **TESTORE**, the **GAGLIANO**, and **GRANCINO**. Milan owns to **C. F. LANDOLPHUS**, a very capital maker, rapidly rising in estimation (1750). He was a pupil of **JOSEPH GUARNERIUS**, and beware of his clever imitations; beware still more of those vulgar red imitations (from which even Gillott's collection was not quite free), perpetrated on many a passable **LANDOLPHUS**, to make him look like a **GUARNERIUS DEL GESU**.

Passing to the French school (1610–1880) we note the fathers of it—**MEDARD** (1610), **BOQUAY** and **PIERAY** (1700–1730), **DE COMBRE** (1730–1760), and, greatest of all,

**LUPOT** and **PIQUE**. These two last men, in all but their  
 203. silicate varnish, which chips rather than rubs,  
**THE FRENCH** made consummate copies of **STRADIVARIUS** ;  
**SCHOOL.** their violins improve every year. To the late  
**M. VUILLAUME** is due the merit of almost recreating a  
 taste for fine violin patterns, not only by his diligent  
 research and collection, but by his admirable studies in  
 the workshop and attention to detail. **CHANOT** and **GAND**  
 are also excellent devotees of the lost art. The awful  
 Mirecourt laboratory sends forth annually wagon-loads of  
 Cremonas, boiled, cleaned, rubbed, and otherwise withered  
 with apparent age. They smell as badly as they sound.  
 The immortal **LUPOT**—greatest of French masters—did not  
 boil and dry in ovens and cook with acids his woods ; he  
 copied fair and varnished full, and time is now doing for  
 him what it will never do for the revolting shams of Mire-  
 court. In fifty years **LUPOT** will rank little below  
**STRADIVARIUS** himself in tone ; his roughness of timbre is  
 even now rapidly mellowing, and his sweet brilliancy is  
 rather suggestive of the clear ringing sweetness of the  
 Strad. than the loud rich roundness of the **JOSEPH DEL GESU**.

In passing to the German School (1621–1800, &c.), the  
 204. two **M. ALBANIS** of Botzen—one **M.** of Gratz  
**THE GERMAN** and a **P.** of Cremona—are not to be confounded  
**SCHOOL.** with the Palermitan **E. ALBANI**, pupil of **N. AMATI**. Setting aside the **FENDTS** and **LOTTs**, who worked in

England, there is but one German name paramount. It is JACOBUS STEINER (1680 and onwards)—he was unhappily deeply infected with round viol ‘tub’ model with the worst of side scoops. After visiting Cremona his form improved, but never attained to the late MAGGINI, much less to the later NICOLAS type. His workmanship at the best is superb ; his varnish green yellow or green brown—often spoiled by being rewashed and oiled by modern cooks—his tone piercing, not to say screaming ; but in every way STEINER is so strong and so full of character that his very defects were idolised ; he fascinated his age, and his mistakes corrupted the violin model in England and retarded the progress of Cremonese form here for about one hundred years.

Passing to the English School, we have to note that (like the French), the Brescian and Cremona makers were at first copied up to the days of BARAK NORMAN 205. THE ENGLISH (1688–1740), when, the French remaining true SCHOOL. to Cremona, the STEINER mania seized upon England ; but although DUKE (1768) and others leaned much to the STEINER model, there certainly never was a time in England when the Italian school had not its eager copyists, and our BANKS (BENJAMIN) 1727—95, may even be called the English AMATI. During the last half of the seventeenth and the first half of the eighteenth centuries the DUKE mania in England raged so furiously that hardly a respectable kitchen in the land, not to speak

of the beer-shop, was without its Duke violin. The DUKE label was as recklessly forged here as the STEINER label in Germany. A fine DUKE will always fetch money ; but fine DUKES are not very common, although the market is choked with the name.

With regret I now quit what I hope has been an instructive as well as an interesting field of observation. The prospect opens before me as I close, and I feel positively oppressed with the number of really good names I have been unable even to allude to consistently with my prescribed limits. The Cremona Sound, the Cremona Connoisseur, the Forger, the Fiddle Market, are still so many untouched chapters, and each of the violin schools here rapidly summarised would amply repay separate attention.

Perhaps the following mems. may be useful to the general reader, and I note them briefly in conclusion.

*Duifoprugcar*, Bologna and Lyons, 1540 (?) interesting as an antique ; without much character ; weak tone ; strings unequal in quality.

206.

TONE      *Gaspar di Salo*, of Brescia, 1560—1610 ;  
QUALITIES.      powerful viol tone, muffled ; but full, round, loud tone in his later flat models.

*G. P. Maggini*, of Brescia, 1590—1640 ; crisper, clearer, and as powerful.

*Nicolas Amati*, of Cremona, 1596—1684 ; very sweet and

sensitive; fourth string weak, but otherwise even and very smooth in tone; deficient in power.

*Stradivarius*, of Cremona, 1644—1737; clear, sweet, bell-like, and at the same time round and full; exceptional in combining such qualities with a certain rich sensitiveness; not thin like Amati, nor gruff like Gaspar, nor coarse as Joseph Guarnerius del Gesu is sometimes.

*Joseph Guarnerius del Gesu*, of Cremona, 1683—1745; often louder than Stradivarius; full, rich, powerful, and when in order, and kept so, sensitive and responsive; often fractious and husky if the least neglected. For solo playing the choice lies between Stradiyarius and Joseph Guarnerius.

*Jacobus Steiner*, German, 1620; piercing, and when not screaming, then sweet and very fascinating, when the ear gets accustomed to it; fourth string wanting in roundness; first string as shrill and keen as a fife. In the following picked catalogue I have italicised the greatest makers.

#### ITALIAN SCHOOLS.

*Brescia*, 1520—1620.

*Gaspar di Salo*, 1560—1610.

*G. P. Maggini*, 1590—1640.

*Cremona*, 1550—1760.

*Andreas Amati*, 1520—1580.

*Jerome and Anthony Amati*, 1570—1635.

*Nicolas Amati*, 1596—1684.

*Stradivarius*, 1644—1737.

*Joseph Anthony Guarnerius del Gesu*, IHS<sup>+</sup>, 1683—1745.

*Carlo Bergonzi*, 1718—1755.

*Florence, Bologna, and Rome*, 1680—1760.

Gabrielli, F.; Techler, R.; The Tononis, B. [Duiffo-prugcar], 1510—30.

*Venice*, 1660—1764.

D. Montagnana.

*Sanctus Seraphino*. G. Tononi.

*Neapolitan*, 1680—1800.

*Grancino Family*. *Testore Family*.

*Gagliano Family* and F. Landolpho.

*French School*, 1610—1875.

Medard, 1610.

Bouquay }  
Pieray } 1700—1730.

De Combre, 1730—1760.

Lupot }  
Pique } 1758—1824.

Vuillaume, 1799—1875.

*German School*, 1621—17—.

Albani, 1621—1680 (?).

*Jacob A. Steiner*, 1620——.

Klotz, 1670—1700.

*English School, 1620—1832.*

Wise & Rayman, 1620—1650.

Barak Norman, 1688—1740.

*Banks*, 1727—1795.

The Forsters, 1739—1808.

*Duke*, 1768, &c.

The Fendts, 1756—1832.

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## III.

## INTERLUDE

## ON A CERTAIN LOAN COLLECTION.

THE following meditation suggested by the famous loan exhibition of violins in 1872, forms a natural sequel to my

207. Royal Institution lecture. A few of the same  
RELATION TO THE PREVIOUS DISCOURSE. allusions will be now repeated ; but I did not think it worth while to mar the unity of the chapter as it stands by suppressing them ; they occur in a different connexion, and are marshalled for a separate purpose. I could not introduce into the previous lecture, delivered before the Royal Institution, the additional facts here dealt with short of prolonging a discourse already over prolix, nor could I omit the old allusions without impairing the setting of some of the material connected with violin history as it stands related to certain special gems of the loan collection. I will therefore conclude my violin dis-

sertations with a few reflections made several years ago in the presence of a very interesting but mixed collection of violins. This was my dream at South Kensington.

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## IV.

## A SOUTH KENSINGTON DREAM.

IN the clear light through the diaphonous cabinets entirely composed of plate-glass, at the South Kensington Museum,

208. such violins and specimens of the Viol tribe were  
BEHIND to be seen exhibited in the year 1872, as in all  
GLASS. probability were never before brought together at

any one time. In a space of a few square yards, I could lose my way for hours. I pause, for instance, at a case full of strange, uncouth, and yet elaborately finished viols called *Viols di Gamba*, *Viols di Bardone*, *Viols d'Amore*; I am carried back to a time when the violin proper was still in obscurity, when *GASPAR DI SALO* (1560–1610) was struggling into notice with his thin-sided and tubby-stomached violins proper, which look to us so graceless, and yet which in reality sounded those notes of progress which were shortly afterwards caught up by his pupil, *MAGGINI*, until they swelled into the sweet tones of the *AMATIS*, and the full, powerful sound torrents of *STRADIVARIUS* and the *GUARNERII*.

Turning from the dusky varnish and uncouth shapes of the ancient viols, my eye is caught by the sharp and delicate

209. outline, and the polished agate splendour of a

CREMONA CARVING. Cremona violin in the next case. A century

has been quickly traversed, not so much that viols ceased to be made in 1720 as that the violin of that date could not possibly have been made in the 1620 period, from which we have just emerged. Then my curiosity is excited for a moment by one of those graceful pear-shaped lutes so common in sentimental pictures. It is also by the great STRADIVARIUS. His, and all other lutes, have long since gone out—at best they were poor things; yet this specimen, exquisitely carved with a rich, heavy, full-lipped Italian face, as a head—a splendid Satyr and Dryad curling around the neck, and every detail of grooving and purfling as perfect as in one of the great violins worth 300 guineas—all this tells of an age when beneath Italian skies, on Venetian balconies, or from black, loose-curtained gondolas, the sound of the lute struck by fair or chivalrous fingers constantly floated over the shallow lagoons of the Adriatic, and was, doubtless, of all others, the sound most loved of knights and ladies.

But I must pause on the threshold. I shall return to

210. this interesting loan exhibition; I shall try and

I REVERT TO VIOLIN HISTORY. point out what were its beauties, without attempting to disguise its weak places; but in con-

nexion with this violin meditation I desire to recall to the reader, at the risk of being accused of repetition, several facts and details which will show how large and important a part the violin has played in the development of the musical art, and if, in again alluding to the rise and progress of the violin, I shall seem to omit anything of importance, I must refer my readers to my preceding Royal Institution lecture and a chapter on STRADIVARIUS, in *Music and Morals*, where I have dwelt at some length upon the general construction of the violin.

The violin, as I have already pointed out, had to wait upon time. Its destinies, like those of music, up to a certain

211. point, were unprogressive—after that point, let us

SKETCH OF  
VIOLIN  
PROGRESS. say 1530, its triumphal march to 1730 was rapid and irresistible. Yet it is curious to notice how

slowly the great obstacles to its perfection were surmounted. Something like a viol seems to have been in existence for centuries before the model attained to anything like its present shape, yet until it attained that shape no real progress from barbarous scraping and weak tubby sounds towards real music was possible. It is true that the instrument kept pace with the development of music, which was at first slow enough. The oblong box, with one or more strings, and an almost flat bridge, could yield nothing but rasping and twanging discord. Yet it was not until melody was wedded to an improved notation that the

merits of curved bridges and scooped-out violin sides became obvious. Without these it is, of course, next to impossible to play on one string without sounding the others.

Then for how many years did the odious guitar frets last ! Several old viols in the South Kensington Museum

212. have them still ; indeed, we believe that the

FRETS AND  
FINGER-  
BOARDS. manufacture of them was not extinct even in the middle of the eighteenth century. But

what limitations they imposed upon the player ; how they cramped his art ; how they made him lean upon props which every violinist now scorns, even to learn his art by ; above all, how they defeated the innate and subtle perfection of the violin by preventing the player from taking quarter-tones, or gliding up through imperceptible intervals ; all which fine and thrilling qualities belong to the perfectly smooth and unmarked finger-board alone. What an indescribable charm has that smooth ebony plate for the true artist ! We have heard people describe their raptures upon surveying the cool ivory and ebony keys of a grand piano ; but such raptures are poor compared with those of the violin lover as he takes up his instrument and looks through the four strings at the black ebony finger-board upon which absolutely nothing is visible, and yet which is ready at any moment to measure for him to a hair's breadth the intervals of his delight. The mystery is hidden, and yet to the cunning player it is an open secret—effects of which he has often proved the

potency sleep along that inclined plane—myriads of swift notes are ready to rush forth and greet him, as his fingers slide up and down it. Weird harmonics will steal forth at certain spots over which his finger broods without pressure, yet with a sensitive and thrilling touch as though feeling stronger contact too close for the bell-like sweetness desired, and seeking rather to draw it forth by the magic of some electric sympathy. Yet there is no hint or trace of the true intervals upon the smooth finger-board : like the opening and shutting of a door with a glimpse into Paradise ; like the myriad tints upon broken water vanishing into the dark transparent monotint, when the light on the wave is gone ; so the ebony board, lately the arbiter of such changeful melodies, sleeps silent, expressionless, the instant the busy fingers are still. But what foul orgies of sound lie also within its range when tampered with, used ignorantly, or abused. What false and hateful intervals, what gross screams, what wicked capabilities of perverting sound !

Well, half the violin's powers for delight or pain, for good or evil, were for centuries destroyed by the use of frets. The

abolition of frets is not only the emancipation, it

213.

THE VIOL D'AMORE. is the creation, of the violin finger-board. Then, again, how long was it before it became evident that for all practical purposes four strings, and only four, were quite as many as could be strung upon any instrument of the viol tribe with due regard to tone, and pitch, and con-

venience. Take a violin and add a fifth string to the bass ; you must stretch it too loosely for an effective resonance, or add one to the treble, and it is superfluous as well as inconvenient—superfluous because we can get on the E string notes as shrill as the human ear can recognise, and inconvenient because any string tuned a fifth above the E string, would be always snapping, and would probably by its horrible tension at last pull the bridge through the belly. No one can walk through the permanent collection of ancient stringed instruments at the South Kensington Museum without realising the point of these observations. Yet Viols di Gamba were made habitually with six strings, stupidly tuned at intervals of a third, tension low, sound tubby ; instead of four strings tuned in fifths, high tension, sound bright. And at one time almost any number of strings more were added by the caprice of makers, or the senseless fancy of virtuosi. One limited use of several strings, and one only, commends itself to us in instruments of the Viol da Braccio, or large tenor make, namely, the production of arpeggios. Some years ago a gentleman in M. JULLIEN's band played beautifully on a viol of this kind. He called it, if we remember rightly, by the old name of Viol d'Amore. The effect produced was exceedingly soft and lovely. The movement consisted of successions of sweeping and beautifully harmonised arpeggios, effective beyond anything that could be produced in that style on four strings. He played upon six, if not more.

Another quite extinct device consists of a series of sympathetic steel wire strings stretched underneath the bridge or on one side of it, in some cases through it, from neck to tail-piece, and tuned to the same notes as the normal gut strings above them. When these last were struck the steel strings vibrated, harmonically as well as normally, and must have produced a kind of mixture as when a piano is played without dampers, or with a loud pedal down, or, as when a carillon is set agoing, and the notes run into each other because there is nothing to check their vibrations.

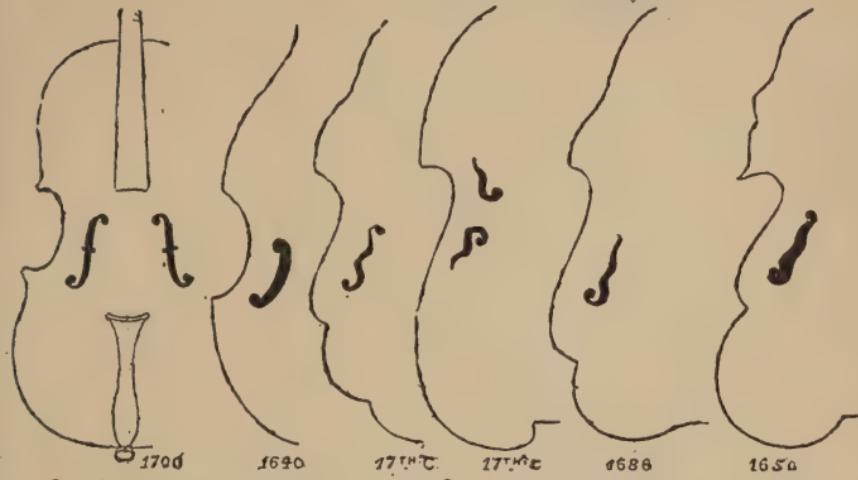
Some sensuous effects unknown to us were doubtless produced in this way; but everything which tends to promote an unregulated echo is destructive of music proper, just as much as a sound-board which keeps echoing a speaker's voice is to that extent destructive of speech proper. Such devices, or "conceits," as the old writers would say, invariably disappear from musical instruments and orchestras as sounds grow more and more out of noise through the discipline of Art into music.

But to return to our violin. What was to determine the shape and size of basses, viols, and violins? The question was fully illustrated in the loan exhibition of 215. THE QUARTETT. which I am speaking. For some time it seemed as if nothing but the caprice of amateurs and lute-makers was to be consulted. All attempts to classify

the number and shapes of the viol tribe, up to at least 1600, must fail. Some idea of the infinite variety of these instruments—a variety which continued long after the modern quartett of instruments (two violins, tenor, and violoncello) had been established—may be gathered by the slight sketches of outlines which I have culled in the South Kensington Museum. But as music acquired form, science, and precision, musical instruments followed suit. It is not too much to affirm that the madrigal created the modern string quartett. The singing schools soon divided the voice into the usual four divisions. The madrigals of the Elizabethan Age brought these four divisions into the most sharply defined perfection. At first the crowd of viols stood like humble lackeys in the ante-chambers of the vocal art, and were only called in to assist the singers, the player standing over the singer and playing the notes in unison with him. It was soon found that each voice ought to have its appropriate viol—the treble voice a treble viol, or what we should call a violin; the tenor and counter-tenor would be accompanied by a violin or viola, or two violas of different sizes; and the bass would be helped through by one of those *Viols di Gamba*—the violoncello of the period of which the South Kensington Museum can boast some splendid specimens. Here, then, we have the elements at least of the modern quartett, but in a sadly servile condition. But now and then it would happen that a voice was absent, and then the voice, instead

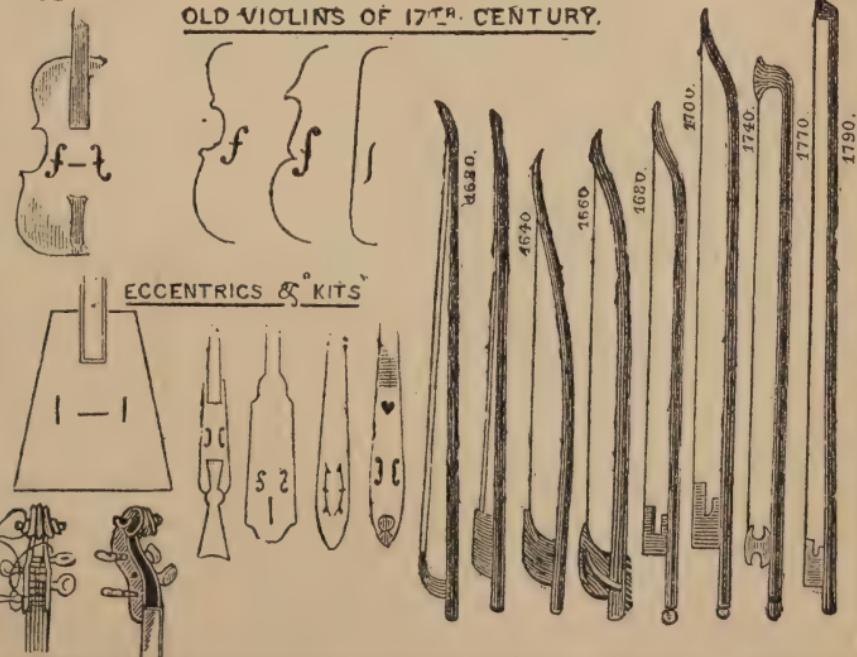
**VIOLONCELLO**

**VIOLS DI GAMBA.**



**VIOLIN**

**OLD VIOLINS OF 17<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY.**





of being attended by, would be *replaced* by, an instrument. At last it appeared that the four instruments could play the madrigal by themselves without the voices, and this was not uncommonly done, as early as Elizabeth's time. We have *Madrigals of five and six parts apart for Violas and Voices*, by THOMAS WHEELKES; DOWLAND, the celebrated lutenist, published, in 1600, *Songs or Ayres with Tablature for the Lute Orpherion, with the Viol di Gamba*. In 1605 instrumental music had already become very independent, for TOBIAS HUME published *Musical Concertes for two base viols, expressing five parts, with pleasant reports one from the other, and for two Theorbo viols, and also for the Theorbo viole, with two treble viola, or two with one treble*, all which shows that the viol tribe could by this time walk very well alone, and, what is more important, that the treble viol was steadily advancing in public favour.

TESTATOR, called IL VECCHIO, of Milan, about 1590, is said by some to have been the first maker of the violin, but

216. DUFFOPRUGCAR (beware of VUILLAUME'S copies !)

THE "LITTLE VIOLIN" BECOMES POPULAR. made undoubted violins at the beginning of that century. The new instrument first got into the French bands, and then cautiously crossed the Channel and began to bid for public favour as the fiddle, or the little violin, in England. It was greeted with the greatest contempt. Why, forsooth, was the peaceable rumbling of the old viols to be screamed down by this impudent

and airy little impostor ? The author of *Musick's Monument* raises almost the last scream against the king of instruments ; it was to be found everywhere, and he could not bear to see the big Theorbo lutes and lumpy viols “ overtoked (in His Majesty’s band—CHARLES II.) by squaling, scoulding fiddlers.” As for their music, he calls it merely “high-prized noise.” But the old masters had hit upon a model which was not to be put down in a hurry when they drew the outline of the first violins. When old viols first came to be cut down, the proportions were naturally found to be all wrong for an instrument of a smaller size ; no doubt the great bulginess of the early violins by GASPARD, DUFFOPRUGCAR, 1515, and even those of GASPAR DI SALO (1560–1610), where the contour is wonderfully in advance of the age, but where the rise of the belly is carried right up pumpkin-wise to the sides, results from the model suggested by simply cutting down the bulging old tenors. Yet, even in this form the superior handiness and sprightliness of the violin shape and tone soon commended itself to the players and the public alike. The following little verse gives a correct account of the matter :—

In former days we had the *Viol* in,  
Ere the true instrument had come about ;  
But now we say since this all ears doth win,  
The Violin hath put the *Viol* out.

CHARLES II., probably in imitation of a far greater potentate and contemporary, with whom his relations are only

too well known through LORD MACAULAY's history, LOUIS XIV., had twenty-four fiddlers (*Les petits violons du Roi*) to play to him during his meals. The French king indulged himself in the same festive manner. And it is doubtless from the Restoration (1660) that the violin began to put the viol out, and take its place along with its brethren the tenor, violoncello, and contrebasse, until cabinet music blossomed into the modern quartett form in which it has long since reigned without a rival.

A few great names connected with the progress and perfection of the violin must be noted. As early as 1449,

217. RARE OLD SPECIMENS. JOAN KERLINO, or CARLINO, founded a great Lute School at Brescia. There was a finely-formed viol reputed to be his in the South Kensington Loan Collection, No. 114, about 1452: its perfect finish and preservation make it almost unique. VENTURI LINELLI, or Linaro, made viols at Venice in 1520, but the specimen, No. 134, in the South Kensington, dated 1563, was without grace or any fine sense of proportion—we should say far inferior to the earlier BRESCIAN CARLINO in everything except wonderful preservation; but then it is a hundred years later, and ought to have been better in every respect. Although it is believed that TESTATOR, of Milan, first made what he named a violin, yet BRESCIA was undoubtedly the first great school of lutists and violin-makers, and GASPAR DI SALO, of Brescia (1560–1610), was

the first man who really conceived of the violin as an instrument worthy of a distinct individuality, and not merely a bulgy viol cut down. In this maker the pumpkin-bellies of DUFFOPRUGCAR (1515) have considerably diminished; the instrument has been somewhat drawn out in length, a well-defined scoop appears on either side of the *ff's*, the middle is still high and barrel-like, the varnish is fine, thick, and brown—no tinge of the mellow red and orange colours so lovely in the later Cremonese makers. The tone of GASPAR's first and second strings is lively, bright, and piercing, “a dry golden sound,” as DR. FOSTER calls it; the third string weak, but sweetly soft; the fourth round and very fine. Compared with the later prodigies of Cremona, the workmanship lacks finish and delicacy, but the cutting is bold and original, the wood is strong, and the *ff* holes are straight and parallel—one of the distinctive marks of the Brescian school—the purfling, or inlaid border that marks the inner edge of all violins, is finely placed and *double*, another distinctive mark of the same school.

JEAN PAUL MAGGINI (1590–1640), (not SANTO MAGGINI of the 18th century), probably a pupil of GASPAR DI SALO's did all that could be done with his master's model, but the sceptre had in reality passed to Cremona, when ANDREAS AMATI (1530?–1580?) began to make violins. His violins are small, his tone sweet but not powerful. His sons, ANTONY and JEROME, who made violins together, excelled

him; and his grandson, NICOLAS AMATI, brought his father's model to still greater perfection. He is considered the great man of the family. Of JOSEPH GUARNERIUS and of STRADIVARIUS, it is not our purpose to speak at any length here. The first, whose violins are distinguished for power above all the AMATIS, but who does not equal the great STRADIVARIUS in perfection of model and finish, and equality of tone, probably stands next to him in the estimation of most violinists. They often say "If we cannot get a Stradivarius, give us a Joseph Guarnerius."

There is one other maker who, at one time, enjoyed in England at least a reputation almost equal to the Cremonese

218. makers, and that is JACOB STAINER. In 1644, THE STORY OF JACOBUS having come from the Tyrol, he worked under STAINER. the AMATIS at Cremona. One of them—NICOLAS or ANTHONY, I cannot quite make out which—offered him a daughter in marriage, which he appears to have declined. He had, for reasons it is needless here to specify, already committed himself to MARGARETHA HOLZHAMMER, whom he married on his return to Absom. She was a peasant girl, and made him an uncongenial wife. Before his marriage he made some of his finest violins; his work is equal in finish to the best Amatis—the belly is modelled higher than the back, the edges are strong and round, the purfling is nearer to the edges than in the Amatis, and very narrow, the *ff* are beautifully cut and

shorter, the upper and under turns being perfectly round, the neck and scroll very regular and smooth. These early instruments are rarely to be found ; the genuine labels are written ; in the Tyrolese forgeries they are often printed.

As his family increased his work began to suffer ; he grew slovenly and rapid, and the violins of this middle period are very inferior. Before long, however, his merits were recognised ; his violins sold well, and this seems to have put him once more upon his metal ; for he again began to work with great care, and made splendid fiddles. At the close of his working life he made sixteen splendid violins, twelve of which he sent as trophies of his genius to the twelve Electors, and the remaining four to the Emperor. These are known as Stainer-Electors. But the end was near, for, either through love or loss of money, he went mad and died soon afterwards. STAINER's tone is pure and silvery, and has a certain piercing quality : it has not the roundness of GUARNERIUS, nor the sweetness of the Amati, nor the even breadth and power of the Stradivarius, but its quality is peculiar and, in the finest specimens, full of charm and character.

BERGONZI, GUADAGNINI, SERAPHINO, ALBANI, are all names of frequent occurrence in the violin trade, and are fetching increasingly large prices ; whilst KLOTZ, STAINER's clever foreman, whose violins are constantly mistaken for those of his master, though

different, the belly being slightly depressed, deserves special notice, and of all his pupils stands first. England can boast of some good makers. RICHARD DUKE's violins were all the rage last century in this country before the merits of the Cremonas were thoroughly understood. Probably STAINER and DUKE, whose instruments are somewhat on the same model, were the most acceptable and popular violin-makers for the English market until towards the end of the last century, when the Cremonas began to find their way over here, alas ! in too great numbers, for most of them were spurious, and swamped everything else. BENJAMIN BANKS, who was born and died in the last century, is by many considered to be the finest of the English makers. His violoncellos are much sought after still. WILLIAM FORSTER, who flourished in the middle of the last century, was one, the greatest, of a family of highly esteemed makers ; and BERNHARDT FENDT, who settled in this country, and died only in 1832, was a clever maker, whose imitations of old violins were good enough to take in the judges at the South Kensington, in 1872, as I shall presently show.

It is in the presence of a fine historical collection like  
220. that of 1872, that I am moved to point out, as  
CHARACTER OF CREMONA I go from case to case, in what consisted the  
WORK. changes which transformed the tubby, old feeble-toned viols into the brilliant, graceful Cremonese model,

with its almost living curves, and its clear sweet notes. The progression has been from the large round viol model, the hump-back and the pot-belly, to the small flat model, with gentle arc in back and belly, softened away with curves of delicious grace and smoothness to the edges of the purfling. The four corners of the side curves have also become full of distinctive character; they are no longer stumpy in outline as though they had difficulty in getting away from the thick bulge of the sides, but they are carried down in the Amatis with a clean and gentle sweep. The Stradivarius corners are still more full of character: they do not hang down so much as the Amatis, they are cut out with great purity and almost lifted up with a kind of balanced elasticity. No one ever laid in purfling like STRADIVARIUS. The purfling consists of three thread-like pieces of wood, two of ebony, the centre one of sycamore, inlaid near the edge and following the lines of the violin in the back and belly. It is of no use beyond giving finish to what is really an exquisite work of Art. Every part of a Stradivarius violin is an unhurried labour of love, and the purfling is full of significance; not only does it test the fine and delicate handling of the workman, but it calls attention to the outlines of his instrument—outlines which are drawn with all the balanced freedom and grace of a Greek frieze. But the royal purfling of STRADIVARIUS bears his sign-manual especially in the treatment of the angles, in the slender string-like points into which it runs—it

seems to shoot suddenly into the corners with a peculiar bend. Up to this point it has rigidly followed the outline of the instrument; but on entering the corners it forms a graceful twist of its own, like a wasp's sting, calling special attention, as it were, to the delicately-finished angles, and making a curve in harmonious contrast with them. This subtle thought is peculiar to STRADIVARIUS and his close copyists, and serves to illustrate the grand and original freedom of his outlines. The two *ff*'s, or sound-holes, are drawn with the same originality, and with a certain severe grace and temperate beauty. Let the eye run over the grotesque wriggling holes of the old *Viols di Gamba*, the vulgar slits, the senseless punctures, the crude experiments of every possible description as illustrated in my plate; let us glance at the straight, stiff Maggini *ff*'s, and then glance back at the perfect wave of the *f* in the Stradivarius violin, cut as with the chisel of a great artist at a single sitting, with an ardour and love of its beauty, and its bend that, after 180 years, is as infectious as ever, making the delight of connoisseurs and the despair of forgers and all other copyists. But nowhere is the master more distinctive than in the fluting of his scroll, and the set and modelling of his heads. Perhaps it never occurred to our readers that there was much difference between one fiddle-head and another; yet a Stradivarius is known from a Stainer, for instance, by his head, as surely as you can tell a Greek from a Jewish face. Take up your Stradi-

varius, hold it straight out against the light with its belly towards you, and note the commanding outline of the head, full front. The two sides of the scroll seem to be almost in motion, like curling wood thrown off by a revolving centrehit or a plane in action. The two points seem a little lifted up with incomparable energy and strength, and lightly balanced with each other. The dip of the head, relieved by the fine fluting, is powerful but not heavy ; and in the finest Stradivarius and Joseph Guarnerius patterns, reminds one of a lion's face in repose, only the Stradivarius is invariably more graceful and beautiful in its majesty where the Guarnerius is strong, with a sort of rough and massive grandeur. But turn from either of these full-fronted heads to lesser magnates, and what a falling off is there—some are what we may call pot-bellied heads ; others brutal, snub, bull-dog heads ; others lean and poor ; others simply coarse and stupid ; others cut mechanically without character, or top-heavy, poor and thin-flanked near the neck ; others without any sense of proportion, the two sides of the scroll uneven, one dipping down lop-eared, and the other turning up like a *nez retroussé*, and so on, until the eye comes back and rests upon the perfect and dignified charms of the Stradivarius head. It will bear inspection—look at it sideways, mark the throw of the scroll ; was there any carving of GIBBONS or the Belgians, any trailing vine-stem, any circling ivy cut in rich oak, more finely felt in its sensitive edges, its harmonious sweep, its

delicate tendril-curves, than the Stradivarius maple-scroll, with its smooth flesh-like flutings, its soft clean edge and circular bends which, like the convolvulus or jessamine coil, is never any part of a true circle? And then look at the varnish lying like a sheet of thin jasper on the back and belly, at once shielding these from decay, whilst revealing century after century the transparent filaments of the mottled maple or sycamore, and the symmetrical deal crossed between the fibres with millions of tiny rays which show where lie the dessicated cells now hollow and fit for perfect resonance through which the sap once flowed. The rich, almost orange-coloured, varnish, is as good as a magnifying glass: through it we can at this day judge of the loving selection made of the choicest timber, and the infinite care bestowed upon its preparation, the tempering as well as the carving of it.

We seek in vain for the conditions under which the great violins were produced. Even if we had the love, the patience,

221. and the inspiration for the work, the work

LOST CONDITIONS. itself would never pay—it would never fetch

the price of the labour and time bestowed upon it. The instrument itself, simple as it looks, is to be composed of no less than seventy-one pieces. Sycamore or maple must be got for the back, sides, neck, and circle. Soft deal for the belly, bass bar, sound post, and six internal blocks; ebony for the finger-board and tail-piece; white

and ebony for the purfling. The wood must be cut only in December and January, and only that part must be used which has been exposed to the sun. You may cut up planks and planks before you find a piece suitable for a really fine back or belly. Witness the grain of a Stradivarius or Amati violin ; mark the almost pictorially beautiful health and evenness of its wavy lines, free from all knots, irregularity of growth, studded with symmetrical and billowy veins, where the rich sap once flowed. And when the wood is cut it must be tempered and dried, not with artificial warmth, but with the slow and penetrating influence of a dry, warm Cremona climate. For no customer, for no market, can the process be hurried. And the application of the varnish required corresponding care. It was to be perfectly wedded to the rare wood—a companionship destined to last for ages—to outlast so many generations of men and women, was not to be enterprised or undertaken lightly. In the spring, when the air got clear and bright and the storms were past, the subtle gums and oils were mixed slowly and deliberately : hours to stand, hours to settle, hours for perfect fusing and amalgamation of parts ; clear white light gleaming from roads strewn with the dazzling marble dust of Lombardy ; clear blue sky, warm dry air, and the skill of an alchemist, these were the conditions for mixing the incomparable Cremona varnish. So deliberately was it prepared and laid on, just when the wood was fit to receive it—laid on in three coats in such a manner as

to sink into the dessicated pores, and become a part of the wood, as the aromatic herbs and juices become a part of the flesh that is embalmed for a thousand years. All through the summer did that matchless varnish, which some say contained ground amber, and which at any rate was charged with subtle secrets, sink and soak into the sycamore and deal plates, until now, when age has rubbed away its clear and agate crust in many places, the violin is found no longer to need that protection, for the wood itself seems to have become petrified into clear agate, and is capable throughout its myriad pores and fibres of resisting the worm, and even damp and the other ravaging influences of ordinary decay.

The old varnishes have been closely imitated by M. VUIL-LAUME, and other clever makers, but a good judge can tell

222. the genuine from the false. It has often been

GOOD AND BAD FIDDLIES. maintained that the dryness of the wood gave the fine quality of tone desired ; and the French makers have accordingly baked the wood of their new violins ; but although the tone has been thus to some extent prematurely mellowed, there is every reason to fear that the baked fiddles, like some old fiddles made of too slight wood and cut too thin, have a tendency to get "played out " ; that is, after attaining tone they lose tone. Age, no doubt, improves wood, and the constant vibration of playing tends, it is said, to shake into hollows the pores of the wood, and expel the particles of dried sap

in dust. But the grand secret after all lay in the manufacture of the original instrument, in the shape, in the preparation of the wood before the parts were fixed together, in the varnish and general adjustments of the interior. The violin, as it comes from the hands of the great makers, as I shall presently illustrate, was always fine. Age and playing cannot make a good fiddle out of a bad one, although age and playing doubtless improves good fiddles. There are hosts of instruments a hundred years old which are, and always will be, bad to the last degree.

Much has been said about the capricious shape of the violin. Some professors have maintained that two flat

223. boards for back and belly would be better than  
THE MYSTIC RULE OF THUMB. any curve. I answer that every degree of flat-

ness has been tried. In the case of the guitar it has been adopted, but the present form of a slightly curved belly and back—the Stradivarius pattern, I must reiterate—is the result of centuries of experiment, and it has held its own, and seems likely to do so, against the most modern and scientific patterns, of which there have been many. The fact is, that in the perfection of each technical trade there is something which escapes analysis. The last handful of refined tin or Drontheim copper thrown in apparently without any apparent method, but with the infallible method of instinct at a particular moment when the seething mass of molten metal reaches a cer-

tain temperature, or presents a certain appearance—that is indispensable to the rich true tone of the bell. Yet the proportions were fixed before. Yes! but that handful, under the circumstances, was yet needful. So with the violin: a certain curve, a block inside placed instinctively a hundredth of an inch one way or the other, a slight hollow, a gentle rise, things which can hardly be weighed and measured, because, with each separate specimen on the same model, there are differences—whoever saw two Stradivarius violins alike?—and differences, however small, change the subtle relations of different parts. These are things which baffle rule and measurement, and make it impossible to produce Stradivarius tone to order. Nor have more ambitious attempts to change those measurements succeeded better, even when Stradivarius measurements have been rightly adopted. Some of us may have heard of a late experiment in France, where a scientific violin and a Stradivarius were played out of sight to a select body of judges, and the judges were fairly puzzled to tell which was which; hence it was inferred that there was no difference. As well tell a man who has been tasting port and sherry alternately several times with his eyes shut that there is no difference between these wines because his sense of taste is not proof against a certain test invented to confuse him. The ear is as delicate and as easily perturbed as the palate.

But the real answer to such modern rivals of STRADI-

VARIUS is that no one will play upon them who can get the genuine article. The extreme difficulty of getting

224. DEAR TO THE PLAYER! a really fine old violin would in itself create a demand for any cheap instrument which could

yield even a fair equivalent in quality. But as regards quality, the secret is one affecting the player quite as much as the listener. A good player can bring a good sound out of almost anything, but *he* feels the difference. A good whip can drive almost any horse somehow and get along. But there are endearing qualities in the rare old violins that cannot be described. They answer to your lightest touch; they can be ridden without saddle, and driven without bit or bridle; they seem to vibrate in advance, and anticipate your most delicate shades of emotion. The coarse fiddles you never can get to understand you, the medium is too gross; you can thrash the sound out of them, and others who know not what you *want* to get or to experience are well satisfied; but *you* are not.

You find in the Cremona an echo of the human soul itself. When BALZAC tells us of a man who had imprisoned the

225. soul of his mother in a violin, he was nearer

THE SOUL OF a certain truth than some of his readers fancy.  
A CREMONA.

The soul that is imprisoned in your violin is not your mother's, it is your own soul, seeking and finding through the most sensitive of all musical instruments an utterance such as the human voice alone can

equal, but not excel. Indeed, it seems that the more genius, the more time, the more love, the more absorption, the more experience have gone to the making of a violin, the more it has become assimilated to the soul of a man. We are evermore taking out of these noble old violins, the great inexhaustible souls that STRADIVARIUS and the AMATIS spent their lives in pouring into them. The violin is like the earth itself, you can only get out of it so much of agricultural wealth as has been put into it.

And now we may well shudder at the dreadful things which have been done in the direction of systematic forgeries of all kinds. Germany is to blame for a vast number of

coarse and impudent fiddles labelled with and

226. libelling the names of GUARNERIUS, the AMATIS,  
**FORGERIES.**

and even STRADIVARIUS, and worth from one pound to thirty shillings a-piece. But the most dangerous of all forgeries are the French forgeries at the close of last century by the firm of LUPOT, and the more modern ones by VUILLAUME—on the whole the best maker of the present century. These violins are calculated to deceive all but the best judges. The most shameful of all practices is one of which our own countrymen cannot altogether be acquitted. A fine violin has often been taken to pieces and two or even three others made out of its parts. The genuine back, or head, or belly, or even sides being relied on to do duty for the spuriousness

of the rest, and the whole violin has often passed as a genuine instrument and fetched a high price. This infamous device has led to the destruction of many a really grand old violin. It is a bitter and heartless mockery to see some noble head and neck on a vile belly, or to find a royal GUARNERIUS back mated to a wretched modern French or English set of ribs and belly. Yet the demand for Cremonas has become of late so extensive that we tremble to think what the fate of the few remaining complete violins may be when once they come, as come they must, from time to time, into the open market.

And now a word about violin bows. It is, no doubt, possible to play upon a violin with a tobacco-pipe, or almost anything that sets the strings in vibration, but

227.  
VIOLIN BOWS. a good well-balanced bow is the indispensable

magic wand required before the magician can produce his more subtle and amazing effects. Up to the middle of the seventeenth century, in 1650, the violin bow was short and clumsy, something like our double bass bows, only without any clasp to keep the horse-hair flat, or screw to pull it tight. CORELLI, in the seventeenth century, played with an awkward bow, much curved, with hardly any elasticity, and ill adapted to produce those finely gradated effects in which violinists now delight. The only idea of expression these old masters seem to have had, was that of playing a passage first loud and then soft. TARTINI (1730), whose

romantic genius chafed against the old stiff style, much improved the bow, making it thinner, longer, more elastic, and, above all, giving it the curve backwards instead of forwards, a peculiarity which violin bows have since retained. It was not, however, until the middle of the eighteenth century, that TOURTE, at Paris, devoted himself to the final improvement of the bow. He is said to have introduced the button and screw, to have abolished the useless prolongation of the point, and given the violin bow that length and sweep which was afterwards brought to such perfection, and which enabled PAGANINI and his followers to effect a revolution in the art of violin playing. My plate will give at a glance the principal improvements in the violin bow.

It is doubtful whether any bow-maker has surpassed our own EDWARD DODD, who, like so many of the great violin-makers, was very long-lived, and died in 1810 in Salisbury Court, Fleet Street, aged, it is said, 105 years. The usual length of a modern violin bow is about twenty-nine inches from top to toe.

In noticing the progress of the violin, it is not possible entirely to separate its history from that of some who have

228.  
ABOUT  
FIDDLERS. played upon it. Players and instruments have acted and re-acted upon one another in a remarkable way. Nor does the violin owe a trifling debt to amateurs. They have brought it into notice; they have kept it there; they have paid the makers; they have

encouraged the professionals. From the earliest times, the viol tribe has had a strange fascination for amateurs, and a very curious list might be made out of its unprofessional votaries. STEPHENS, in his *Essays and Characters*, 1615, observes that a fiddler is, when he plays well, a delight only to those who have their hearing; but is, when he plays ill, a delight only for those who have not their hearing. But we demur to this last statement: for the fiddler is always a delight unto himself. The bad player from the first is never deterred from his absorbing pursuit by the horrible sounds which he produces. He may tire of the flute, cornet, or piano; but the variety of screams and scratches that can be got out of rosined horse-hair rubbed upon catgut, at once establishes the violin supreme in variety and attraction. SALOMAN once said to GEORGE III., whilst instructing that monarch in the subtle art, "Fiddlers may be divided into three classes. To the first belong those who cannot play at all; to the second, those who play badly; and to the third, those who play well. You, sire, have already reached the second"; which reminds one of HAYDN's reply to another royal personage who was anxious to know what the composer thought of his performance, "Vy, sir, your Highness plays like a Prince!"

But fiddlers did not all at once become the companions of princes. Their music used to be called simply "noyse." Mulligrub, in the *Dutch Courtesan*, says, "Oh, wife! oh, wife! oh, Jack! how does thy mother? Is there any

fiddlers in the house?" Mrs. Mulligrub replies, "Yes; Mr. Creakes's noyse."

Yet though from the earliest times up to the great Cremona period, the small viol was associated almost exclusively with routs, pot-houses, or at best dancing-parties, the clergy may claim the merit of having been true to it from the first.

The clergyman of EDWARD II.'s time, when he went out into society took, in addition to his kerchief and his comb,  
his "rowbyble," otherwise called rebella or viella.

229.  
THE CLERGY AS FIDDLERS. The old viols were much used in churches, and although it was some time before the new-fangled violin was admitted into the sanctuary, yet the Brescian and Cremonese models soon forced an entrance; and I have in my possession a genuine GUARNERIUS which has unfortunately been cut down in the ribs, and still retains the mark where a hook has been fastened into the back to fasten the chain which went round the player's neck, and supported the violin whenever he had occasion in processions to drop suddenly on his knees at the elevation of the Host. OURY pointed out to me the little round hole in the back, since carefully plugged. BOURDALOUE, the celebrated French preacher, found the violin indispensable to the composition of some of his sermons. He used to say that he often got too depressed to treat his subjects with the necessary vigour and variety. He would then

resort to exercise and to a good stiff practice on his violin, and would find himself completely restored by the process. I am told that DR. NEWMAN (now Cardinal) is an excellent violinist. After this we may think the poet COWPER a little hard on another reverend fiddler—the excellent CHARLES WESLEY, who, at the close of some laborious day, would often resort to his violin.

With wire and catgut he concludes the day,  
is a sharp line which the kind-hearted poet is said to have  
regretted in his later years.

A more graceful comment was called forth from DEAN SWIFT, when in his presence a lady's mantle or *mantua* caught fire and injured a gentleman's violin that happened to be lying near it :

“*Mantua, vœ ! miseræ nimium vicina Cremonæ !*”

The rise of the violin in England was greatly indebted to royal patronage. QUEEN ELIZABETH was not only in the habit of dancing to it, but presented a quaint 230. but splendidly carved specimen of the instrument to the EARL OF LEICESTER, preserved in the South Kensington Museum, in the loan collection, numbered 125. In 1613, ten of the king's violinists received one pound a-piece for performing at the Court masque. CHARLES GUEROLT and THOMAS GILES, at different times

instructors of music to PRINCE HENRY afterwards HENRY VI., had annuities of one hundred marks each. CHARLES I. was a great patron of music, and took lessons from MR. COPERARIO, a fine player on the Viol di Gamba. In the accounts of JAMES I., we find a charge of forty pounds for a set of viols for the king. This king did himself the honour to incorporate the musicians of London, when they had for arms, "Azure, a swan argent within a tressure counter-flure; or, in a chief, gules, a rose between lions; or, for crest, the celestial sign Lyra." And CHARLES I., in his eleventh year, granted a charter to NICHOLAS LANIERE and others, styling them "Marshell Wardens and Cominality, of the Arts and Science of Musick in Westminster, in the county of Middlesex." But CHARLES II. did most for the violin by giving it the preference over all the old viols in his private band. PEPYS, in his Diary, lets us perceive the pride and solace he took in his violin. "21st November, 1660. At night to my viallin. The first time I have played on it since come to this house, in my dining-roome, and afterwards to my lute there; and I took much pleasure to have the neighbours come forth in the yard to hear me. December 3rd. Rose by candle, and spent my morning in fiddling, till time to go to the office. 12th April, 1669. Home—and after sitting awhile thrumming upon my viol and singing, I to bed, and left my wife to do something to a waistcoat and petticoat she is to wear to-morrow."

It is hardly necessary to observe that the Church and the aristocracy now vied with each other in promoting the interest of music, and especially in their *grandes passions* for the violin. Amongst the exhibitors at the South Kensington I find the names of several clergy, and the Dukes of EDINBURGH and of LEINSTER, with many other illustrious noblemen, who have not been slow in bringing together several splendid instruments for exhibition, some of which I shall have occasion to allude to presently.

A great deal has lately been said about the propriety of ladies playing the violin. Some people seem to think it

231.  
LADIES AS VIOLINISTS.

quite a novelty, but the practice in England at least is old enough. On the painted roof of Peterborough Cathedral, said to be not later than 1194, is depicted a female figure seated and holding on her lap a sort of viol with four strings and four sound-holes : her left hand grasps the head, whilst she draws a bow across the strings with her right. Amongst the royal accounts, November 2, 1495, we read, "To a woman who singeth with a fidell, 2s. ; the queen's male 'fideler' of the period, Feb. 17, 1497, was paid 'in rewarde,' £1 6s. 8d."

Poor ANNE OF CLEVES, after her divorce from HENRY VIII., amused herself sometimes by playing on a sort of viol with six strings and frets, but no distinct finger-board. From a ballad in CHARLES I.'s reign, I find that the art of viol playing was not uncommon amongst

ladies ; and amongst the accomplishments of a lady, we read that—

She sings and she plays  
And she knows all the keys  
Of the viol de Gamba and lute.

In more modern times ladies have excelled on the violin. MOZART wrote a sonata for REGINA SCHLICK, born at Mantua, 1764. LOUISE GAUTHEROT, a Frenchwoman, was also distinguished for her concertos played at the London Oratorio Concerts, 1789-90. LUIGA GERBINI, a pupil of the celebrated VIOTTI, played solos at Lisbon in 1799, and afterwards visited London in 1801. SIGNORA PARAVICINI, another of VIOTTI's pupils, was a favourite of JOSEPHINE, the wife of BUONAPARTE. She afterwards grew so poor as to be obliged to part with most of her wardrobe, but was charitably helped by some generous Italians at Milan. In 1827 she was much admired, and in the words of a poet—

Flourished her bow and showed how fame was won.

She played at Bologna as late as 1832. The names of MESDAMES KRAHMEN, SCHULTZ, ELEONORA NEUMANN, and FILIPOWICZ, will be familiar to some of our readers, whilst few living musicians will need to be reminded of M<sup>DLLE</sup>. SOPHIE HUMLER and MADAME NORMAN-NERUDA.

It was, I believe, once maintained that the arm of a *beau* was more fit for a lady than a *bow* arm ; but that prejudice has now happily vanished. Indeed nothing can

be more appropriate in a lady's hands than a violin properly held and properly played. If she have a good arm it is shown to the best advantage; if she have a pretty hand and tapering fingers, and a slender wrist, all these are thrown into the most graceful positions by the action of bowing and fingering.

Her arms, shoulders, and hands, her head and neck, and indeed her whole body, have but to follow sympathetically the undulating and delicate curves of the violin itself. A beautiful woman holding a beautiful violin is one of the most beautiful sights in the world. There are refinements of sentiment and of execution, which a woman's sensitive hand is peculiarly fitted to render; in delicacy of touch and finely gradated effects she is unsurpassed, and although usually deficient in roundness of tone, yet both in rapidity of execution and in fine feeling, have we not lately seen in the case of MADAME NORMAN-NERUDA *quid fæmina possit!*

Some of our readers may be interested to know the names of the favourite violins used by several illustrious musicians.

232. MOZART, MM. ALARD and SIVORI, all possessed **VIOLINISTS AND THEIR VIOLINS.** fine STAINER violins. PAGANINI's favourite instrument, now at Genoa, was a JOSEPH GUARNERIUS. DRAGONETTI's double-basses, chiefly by GASPAR DI SALO, were duly displayed at the South Kensington Loan Exhibition. SIGNOR BOTTESEINI produces his marvellous effects and

musical gymnastics upon a small CARLO TESTORE contrebasso. This Milanese maker dates his instruments 16—, the last two figures being always written in MS., a common practice with the old makers, who sometimes even wrote the whole label *propriâ manu*. The forgeries, on the other hand, have often the whole label printed. LINDLEY, the great violoncello player, seems to have been strangely partial to English makers. He made his *début* on a THOMAS SMITH, whose instruments average from five to eight pounds; and for nearly forty years he played at the Italian Opera on a WILLIAM FORSTER, which he surnamed “The Eclipse.” SIGNOR PIATTI owns a splendid STAINER tenor, lately exhibited in the South Kensington Museum. DE BERIOT, oddly enough, chose, for many years, to play on a MARIANI, of Brescia, (1570–1620), by no means one of the first makers; indeed, he lived before the splendid Cremonese period, and followed the models of MAGGINI. OLE BULL possessed a remarkably fine MAGGINI, with Caryatides, said to be by BENVENUTO CELLINI. In 1861, M. VIEUXTEMPS used a LORENZO STORIONI (about 1782). This maker was the last of the old Cremonese school. He made on the model of JOSEPH GUARNERIUS, and his tone was much admired. M. JOACHIM, I believe, plays habitually on a fine STRADIVARIUS. PROFESSOR ELLA informs me that MOLIQUE, PIATTI, AUER, and others have made their *début* upon inferior instruments, and only acquired their full reputation when later they became possessed of fine violins. Many aspirants to fame have had to thank the Professor for

the loan of his GUARNERIUS and STRADIVARIUS at the Musical Union Concerts. But it must be remembered that most violinists have several instruments with different qualities, suitable for different occasions, and, like other men, they are liable to part with their instruments and acquire others.

I will now ask the reader to look with me a little more closely at that Loan Collection of 1872 in the South

233. Kensington Museum, which I have from time

A CRITICISM  
ON THE LOAN  
COLLECTION. to time referred to in the course of this pro-

tracted meditation. That exhibition, though now closed, has an interest and significance for all lovers of violins far beyond the limits of a few show-months. The instruments are most of them more or less historical. Each is known to a large circle of admirers ; some have a world-wide reputation, whilst a few have been puffed into notice and clearly over-rated. Under these circumstances, in the interests of Art, I shall not hesitate to place on record some judgments upon them which, I trust, may have more than an ephemeral value.

Let us once more approach these fascinating glass-cases, determined to see all that can be seen, and lay it to heart. At first the eager student will probably be disappointed. They all look to him so much alike ; is there really the difference between £20 and £600 in the instruments before him ? I remember that my first visit to the Italian

picture-galleries filled me with the same feeling of puzzled disappointment. The pictures I liked were seldom the best; all the browns were much alike, and one old master seemed little different from another; above all, a fine copy looked quite as good as, or rather better than, the original. It is only after looking, and looking for months, for years, that the old painters reveal themselves; and it is only by examining and brooding over violins that the characteristics of each master slowly come out beyond a shadow of a doubt, until we may be said to know a good fiddle when we see it.

Let us examine first, one case containing three violins, lent by M. VUILLAUME, which is in some respects more interesting than all the rest put together. It contains the unique "Messie," STRADIVARIUS (91); its history is romantic. It was finished in 1716, and until a few years ago had never been played on at all. It was bought in 1760 by the COUNT COZIO DE SALABUE, who never played it, but kept it spotless, like some rare jewel, till his death. His heirs sold it to LUIGI TARISIO, who kept it jealously without allowing anyone even to see it. At his death, in 1854, it was hidden away in the "Ferme de la Croix," near the little village of Fontanelle, Navarre. There M. VUILLAUME rediscovered it in January 1855, and upon breaking its silence for the first time discovered that it possessed all the finest qualities

of the finest STRADIVARIUS violins, although it had never been played upon until then.

We stand reverently before it—fresh from the great master's hand, as though finished yesterday—it is for the first time unveiled in all its intact glory to the gaze of thousands to whom for years it has been a kind of myth. It is as though the ivory Minerva of PHIDIAS that stood once in the Parthenon, should be discovered hidden away with the utmost care in some deep, dry, and hermetically sealed sepulchre of the East, and brought over scathless to be set up amidst the Elgin fragments, the only perfect relic of them all. So stands this matchless new violin amidst its time-worn, rubbed, and fractured brethren.

It is of the grand pattern, and yet, as in Milan Cathedral, beauty rather than power is its distinguishing characteristic; it is massive without looking massive; its strength is hidden beneath its grace. The back is in two parts, the wood very choice. The fine graining of the flat belly is remarkable. The holes are delicately cut, the left *f* a shade lower than the right—a practice so common that it must have been intentional with STRADIVARIUS—his fine eye not tolerating even there the suspicion of mechanical work. We see in this violin alone what the perfect STRADIVARIUS corners were; in every other known specimen the varnish and the wood are both rubbed. In the "Messiah" they are untouched and clean-looking, wondrously sharp and wide-awake, yet without vulgarity, and of a perfect finish.

The ease and neatness of the purfling, which has, of course, never been repaired, is incomparable, and over the whole instrument lies a thick, rich, red-brown varnish, wondrous to behold ; the washing of it is level and lavish, and unworn by time or use. The brush seems to have left it about a week—it is hanging up in the warm workshop at Cremona, and has just dried with all the glitter fresh upon it. The neck has been skilfully lengthened by M. VUILLAUME ; but in order to avoid touching the fabric he has inserted a piece of wood flat between the heel and the rib instead of cutting into the internal block : the usual method adopted in lengthening the old fiddle necks for modern use.

The head is light and graceful rather than heavy or powerful, the scroll thrown off like a ribbon lightly curled around the finger and drawn in ; one side of the scroll is slightly lower than the other, the fluting smooth, with a surface like that of clear and still water, and the lines of the scroll are picked out with a thick rim of brown paint or varnish that serves to accentuate the outlines of the head just as purfling calls attention to the contour of the back and belly. In every other violin this black head-rim has been almost entirely effaced, but in the “Messiah” it remains to show us the maker’s intention. He meant you to take up his violin and to see at a glance its whole outline, traced and emphasized by a sharp purfling carried out in the head by a deep rim of black varnish. This brooding over the beauty of curves, this anxiety that they should be manifest to all

men, is most instructive and touching ; neither the purfling nor the black paint added to the tone, or even the preservation of the instrument, it was the art instinct of the old makers piercing the manufacture.

By the side of the “Messie” hangs the “Pucelle” violin of STRADIVARIUS. It, also, has a history. It bears a label

235.  
THE  
PUCELLE.

1709 ; it has been very little played on ; it came to Paris in 1840 ; it passed into the hands of M. LEROY, banquier, and at his death went to his heir, M. GLANDAZ. It is of the grand pattern ; purfling repaired under the left or chin side ; the *f*'s boldly cut and coarser than in the “Messiah,” and it seems to lack the absolute sense of proportion between the top and bottom, which gives to the “Messiah” its regal breadth and freedom of outline. The head is powerful, though less happy than some others ; it bears remains of the black paint on the scroll ; the varnish is thick and rich in colour, browner and yellower than in the “Messiah,” which is reddish. The back is in two parts, and the belly rises in excess of the “Messiah.” A STRADIVARIUS violin, lent by M. E. LECOMTE (87), is finer than the “Pucelle,” although the head is doubtful—probably an old French head—in other respects it is a masterpiece. One of the late MR. GILLOTT’s STRADIVARIUS violins (92), is a good specimen ; but the varnish is poor thin stuff. The (140) GILLOTT’s so-called STRADIVARIUS tenor, is a very doubtful affair. The

belly and holes are very good, but the scroll is simply monstrous ; the back and sides are of the poorest, coarsest wood ; the corners hang down like those of an AMATI. STRADIVARIUS never cut them. They may be by GRANCINO, or more likely still, by BERGONZI, after STRADIVARIUS's death.

M. GALLAY's and M. F. PAWLE's STRADIVARIUS basses naturally attract us. The first, which was purchased for

236. £800, has a finer scroll than the other, and is on

ANTONIUS the whole the best of the two. MR. and MRS.  
AND JOSEPH.

JAY's case of a STRADIVARIUS and two AMATIS, prove how the greatest masters may occasionally turn out commonplace and characterless instruments—these are not happy, though they are genuine specimens; the varnish for STRADIVARIUS is especially poor. 84 is an interesting, because late, weak, but undoubtedly genuine STRADIVARIUS. It shows the old man's failing powers, especially in the cutting of the belly, where the STRADIVARIUS curves are felt without being properly carried out. 93, in the "Messie" case is perhaps the finest JOSEPH GUARNERIUS in the world. The head is noble—stronger than the "Messie," though less delicate and beautiful ; the whole instrument is to the "Messie" as a lion to a race-horse ; the wood of the belly is splendid, so is the work throughout, but the conception is all for power and breadth, and the workman's tools were probably inferior to those of STRADIVARIUS. 94, dated 1735, lent by M. LOUIS D'EGVILLE, is another superb JOSEPH

GUARNERIUS; 95 is a more coarse but characteristic specimen of the same maker, the property of MR. AMHERST, dated 1734.

There are no less than five basses once the property of DRAGONETTI, his favourite bass, a GASPAR DI SALO, of 1580,

237. is amongst them ; and a monster presented by DRAGONETTI'S him to the DUKE OF LEINSTER, which would BASSES.

require a ladder to climb up to its head, stands alone, like the Pyramid of Cheops, looking down upon a race of pygmies ; but besides size and ugliness it has no special qualities. 109 is one of the finest Bergonzis I ever saw, now the property of MR. HART. There are four miniature violins for children, all fine and all genuine. Two are by STRADIVARIUS, one by JOSEPH GUARNERIUS, and one an AMATI. They are the exquisite bantams of the craft. We must pass over several interesting specimens, but before we leave these cases we must note a few sad sights.

First, the QUEEN'S AMATI has been dreadfully cut down : it bears a raised pattern all round the belly, the old edge is

238. gone, and the purfling has doubtless been injured, SOME LITTLE but is now much concealed by the raised work :

MISTAKES. 136 is another fine AMATI cut down, and cruelly cut down ; 139 is another AMATI treated in the same way, but not so badly. Strange to say, 147, doubtless a NICHOLAS AMATI, hung—although the error was pointed out, to the

end of the Exhibition—under the name of a MAGGINI viola ! A KLOTZ tenor, belonging to the DUKE OF EDINBURGH, was called a STAINER, and hung as such. As it is an obvious KLOTZ, and as this, too, was pointed out, it should have been removed, especially as other violins, *e.g.* a spurious BERGONZI (110), sent in by MR. J. W. JOYCE, was judiciously removed after being hung. It is curious that the most glaring blot of all in this remarkable collection should have been suffered to remain to the close of the Exhibition without a word of apology or explanation long after the spurious instrument had been fully exposed, and its history given in detail. I allude to the famous so-called MAGGINI violin, sent up by MR. J. W. JOYCE, and hung by the judges.

This violin (No. 112), is now well known not to have been made by MAGGINI 200 years ago, but to have been copied by BERNHARD FENDT, about forty years ago. It was bought by worthy MR. STANHARD, who fiddled on it much in the Portsmouth Theatre. His widow advertised it in the *Clerkenwell News*, and it was sold for a few pounds to MR. NASH, a barber in the Commercial Road. It then passed into the hands of REV. THOMAS MAWKES. At last it got into the possession of MR. J. W. JOYCE, and was offered with another spurious instrument as a MAGGINI violin to the South Kensington Museum Loan Exhibition. And there it hung, rejoicing in its ill-gotten fame, like a second Claimant, in the teeth

of constant exposure and derision. Where the deception rests, it is not for me to say. These statements, which I have repeated in print several times, have been received in perfect silence by all parties concerned; and until that silence of living witnesses is broken we must in honour acquit everybody of fraud, and suppose that they have all been taken in; but the story is highly instructive, as showing the care required in passing judgment on old violins, and, I may add, the extreme unwillingness of self-elected connoisseurs to admit that they have been taken in.

I now part with our “old violins” with feelings not unmixed with regret; the very sums of money given for them bear witness to their strange in-  
239.  
PRICES. definite value and importance. The owner of the “Messie” refused 600 guineas for that unique gem, whilst 800 and even 1,000 guineas have been offered by some who could not get their favourites for less.

And what is it that we pay for? A little wood, varnish, paint—a few shillings would buy all the materials; the simplest mechanical knowledge is sufficient to cut up and put together the common fiddle, which is now sold for ten or fifteen shillings, and looks to the novice so much more desirable than the “Messie,” or “Pucelle,” though not unlike them. Then what do we pay for? We pay for what no money can produce again; we pay for conditions that have passed away; we pay for the inspiration of a matchless

workman, and a subtle soul infused into elements which seem beggarly, but have become priceless ; we pay for the concentrated experience of not one life, but many, put into a curve or a fluting—for a few thin plates of wood fixed together with an instinct that is dead, but that ere it died made those slips of wood almost immortal. There is no reason why the violin should ever wear out. It grows old with its perpetual youth. It sings over the grave of many generations. Time, that sometimes robs it of a little varnish, has no power over its anointed fabric—it need never be battered. The Joan Carlino viol is 320 years old, and still almost without a scratch. I wish to believe it genuine. The hard perennial substance steeped in the silicate-like varnish, has well-nigh turned to stone, but without losing a single quality of sweetness or resonance. The violin is the only fossil which still lives, and lives with a fulness of life and freshness that contrasts mysteriously enough with the failing, sickly, and withering generations of man. Even should mishaps bruise or break its beauty, it can be endlessly restored—it is never fit for death ; it survives a thousand calamities ; nay, even when cut up, dismembered, its several parts scattered through a dozen workshops and through 500 years, live on with a kind of metempsychosis in new forms, and still cling strangely to their individuality, so that men, taking up a patchwork violin, say—it is fine, the front is poor, the head is tame ; but then, see, here is a Stradivarius back.

Thus human in its power and pathos, and superhuman in its immortal fabric, the violin reigns the prince of all instruments, and in the hands of a PAGANINI, an ERNST, or a JOACHIM, the joy and wonder of the civilised world.

*Note on the Plate.* It is next to impossible to draw a violin outline. The diagram does not profess to be quite accurate. Even photography seems to fail, as it cannot render truly the all-important variations of surface. The difference between a Guarnerius and a Stradivarius would hardly be appreciable in outline to an untrained eye. I have omitted to give more than one head scroll, because of the subtlety ; and I have left out the double bass, because of its size. The "Kits" are almost dummies, used chiefly by dancing masters.

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## V.

## INTERLUDE

## ON THE OBLIVION OF GREAT MEN.

THE pathos of places. Few people are quite insensible to it. Religion consecrates Mount Olivet, Art crowns the Acropolis ; and Rome, that grave of Empires, still draws its crowds of pilgrims, who seem never weary of passing to and fro between the Palaces of the Cæsars to the Mausoleum of the Popes.

Yet there is a caprice in memory ; one is taken and another left. As I write, CARLYLE's house in Cheyne Row is about to be sold—some say demolished. I had great difficulty, a few years ago, in discovering MAZZINI's house in the Fulham Road. Germany is thought to be more careful of such associations. I certainly notice the alacrity with which statues of her poets, councillors, and musicians, are placed in the town squares and parks ; but only the other day, when I

was at Leipsic, I was struck by a singular case of oblivion and neglect. I inquired at Leipsic for the house in which MENDELSSOHN had lived and died. At last I found it. My search was not so prolonged or so interesting as in the case of the house of STRADIVARIUS at Cremona.

I found the house to be No. 21 König-strasse. The memorial tablet mentioned by BAEDEKER was gone. I made

241. many fruitless inquiries. Good MR. REUTER,  
<sup>I VISIT</sup>  
<sub>MENDELSSOHN'S HOUSE.</sub> who lived there, at once left his office in the yard, and took me into the rooms where so much of the loveliest music was conceived and written between 1835–1847. The spacious flat of nine rooms all belonged to FELIX MENDELSSOHN. MR. REUTER showed me the large reception-room, and then took me into the sitting-room and bed-room, in which last the composer died. It is a little room, and those who remember the account of his death, and the numbers of people who seem to have been in and out of the room, can see at a glance how natural this was—supposing the sitting-room adjoining to have been full of friends. The court-yard, now used for bales of merchandise, and paved, was a garden in MENDELSSOHN's time, and he lived in the back of the house, and latterly almost in two rooms, because of the quiet of the place. The REUTERS have had the fabric restored, and partitions removed, so that the house is substantially as MENDELSSOHN left it; but the bustle and commerce of Leipsic has enor-

mously increased since 1847, and in more senses than one  
the place knows him no more.

The world seems to have little need of the best of us  
when we are gone. The house is let—the photographs of

242. the dead disappear from the shop windows—

<sup>WHO</sup>  
<sub>REGARDS</sub> there's a new foot on the floor—a new face  
<sup>THE DEAD?</sup> in the street—a new name in all mouths.

BEACONSFIELD—GARIBALDI—CARLYLE—EMERSON—'tis all  
one; your reputation must live in individual hearts: out of  
all your deeds one or two only will be remembered; of your  
words, a few phrases; of your books, a volume or so; but  
of a dozen that will continue to be printed only half that  
number will be read, and at the end of a century or two,  
perhaps a phrase or chapter only will survive. Few, indeed,  
are the producers of whom it can be said, as we may say of  
STRADIVARIUS—he is more alive now in the hearts of men  
than ever he was at Cremona.

After 200 years, every trace of his handiwork is eagerly  
sought out. Bits of it are thankfully, and not always  
honestly, secured. Time only increases our interest in

243. him, and enhances the value of his handicraft.

<sup>THE VITALITY</sup>  
<sub>OF STRADI-</sub>  
VARIUS. Every fragment of wood which is thought to  
bear the mark of his chisel, is treasured like a  
gem, and the waste of his workshop was found sufficient to  
make the reputation of FRANCESCO BERGONZI and a host of

imitators. The rumour of a new STRADIVARIUS is like the rumour of a new RAPHAEL—the civilised world competes for the prize, and the sums which have been given for one of his violins—enormous as they may seem for a few thin strips of wood varnished and glued together—are probably nothing to the sums that a fine example of the master will fetch in the course of the next hundred years. Yet this man sold his violins for four pounds apiece, and a consignment of STRADIVARIUS violins sent to London in the last century were sent back to Italy again, and no one seemed willing to buy them, even at that moderate figure. I suppose in these days the city of Cremona is known to the outside world chiefly as the residence of STRADIVARIUS. I will now relate what befell me when I made a pilgrimage to that city in the year 1880 to seek for the house of ANTONIUS STRADIVARIUS.

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## VI.

## STRADIVARIUS OF CREMONA—HIS HOUSE.

FOR years I had said to myself, I will go and see this house at Cremona. The violin is the king of instruments.

STRADIVARIUS is the king of violin-makers. In  
244. MY THOUGHTS AT BRESCIA. the short space of about 130 years, from 1600 to 1730, all the greatest violins in the world were made. They sold the best of them for 10 golden louis,

they sell the best of them for from 300 to 1,000 guineas. I was at Brescia. There, before 1600, worked the fathers of the violin—the men who began to get rid, one after another, of those lets and hindrances to tone, of those tubby shapes and faulty proportions which belong to the ancient Viol tribe. The names of MAGGINI and GASPAR DI SALO are for ever associated with those early experiments and with Brescia. They paved the way. They struck the types, violin, viola, violoncello, and double-bass out of the host of nondescript viols, Viol da Gamba, Viole d'Amore, Violetti, &c. &c. They decided upon the survival of the fittest—on what has actually survived—they paved the way for Cremona. Yet at Brescia their houses are unknown, there are no relics of them. Their only relics are in the hands of a few amateurs and a few museums. MR. TYSSEN-AMHERST has perhaps the finest known Gaspar violin; the Gaspar basses are more numerous. DRAGONETTI's monster Gaspar is in the South Kensington—the only instrument by any decent violin-maker that *is* now in that museum. MR. ENTHOVEN has perhaps the finest known Maggini. And so the Brescian school, full of unique significance as it was, died and was buried, but not before it had yielded up its secrets to the AMATIS and GUARNERII who settled at Cremona. In the great square of St. Domenico the AMATI set up their shop; later, next door to them, worked the GUARNERII. About 1760, the young man named ANTONIUS STRADIVARI, or STRADIVARIUS, became, as we have seen, the devoted pupil

of NICOLAS, the greatest of the AMATI. ANDREW GUARNERIUS worked in the same room with him. ANTHONY copied NICOLAS's work as closely as he could; for more than twenty years he did little but copy.

These three names — AMATI, the GUARNERII, STRADIVARIUS—there be none like them; these three shops, almost next door to each other, opposite the big church of St. Dominic—there never were, nor will be, three such shops. In them were made, in long quiet years of peaceful, sunny labour, in steady and friendly rivalry, all the great violins in the world—the Joseph Guarnerius on which PAGANINI played, now in the town-hall at Genoa; the Stradivarius on which ERNST, and now MADAME NORMAN-NERUDA, plays; PIATTI's violoncello; JOACHIM's and WILHELMJ's “Strads.” And the charm of these Brescian and Cremonese schools lies here, that in those days violin-making was a living, growing art, as Gothic architecture once was. Each maker was a discoverer with the enthusiasm and excitement of the unknown upon him, working out problems of tone, studying form, material, method, technique, with a view to new effects; spending a life-time over it. I have already shown at length how with STRADIVARIUS the art culminated, all was done that could be done; tone, sweetness, power, sensibility, sonority, all was won; and then the decline set in, love waxed cold, and men could no more reproduce the old work than they could paint the old pictures, or carve the old statues, or build the old cathedrals.

So I said to myself at Brescia, I will go and see where the great STRADIVARIUS lived for ninety-three years, and loved and laboured with such absorbed and steadfast earnestness and such wondrous cunning, that for 180 years hardly a capital of the civilised world has ceased to do homage to his power, a power that is felt and loved ever more and more, and looked forward to year by year, as, with the return of JOACHIM, SARASATE, NORMAN-NERUDA, WILHELMJ, the mighty soul of STRADIVARIUS again speaks to thousands, and with one touch of nature makes the whole world kin.

Everyone, I said, will know the house of STRADIVARIUS at Cremona ; not even the magnificent cathedral, with its almost unique façade, is so famous as the name  
<sup>245.</sup> <sub>NOT KNOWN.</sub> of the great violin-maker ; Cremona itself is known to the outside world by nothing else.

So I got into a cab at the station.

“Drive,” said I, “to the *casa* of ANTONIUS STRADIVARI.”

“What casa ?” said the man ; “I do not know the name.”

“Not know the name of STRADIVARIUS, the great violin-maker ! ”

“I don’t think he lives here ; they don’t make violins at Cremona.”

“Perhaps not,” said I, a little nettled, “but they used to. STRADIVARIUS, and JOSEPH GUARNERIUS, and the AMATI made them.”

“Upon my oath and the holy name of the Virgin, I

assure you, Signor, they never made any violins at Cremona ; you are mistaken.”

The driver’s temper was giving way, so was mine.

“Per Bacco !” said I, as I thought under the circumstances I might swear by a heathen god ; “drive to the cathedral !”

So he drove.

The splendour of those red marble lions couchant, supporting the marble columns both of the cathedral porch and

246.  
TO THE CATHEDRAL.

of the adjacent baptistery, the exquisite terracotta work and double colonnaded façade, and the great Campanile, at any other time would have tempted me to linger, but not now. I entered and cast but a languid eye upon the rich and ancient tapestries and profuse decoration in mosaic and fresco which cover every inch of the interior. The sacristan was lighting a few candles in the darkness over the high altar. I made towards him ; he came down.

“Can you tell me where STRADIVARIUS is buried ?” said I, thinking it might be better to begin at the other end this time.

“Oh, Signor,” he said with a smile, “thank the blessed saints and all the martyrs, STRADIVARIUS is not dead ; the *avocat* is alive and in good health !”

“Ah, well,” said I, “but where would he be buried if he were dead ?”

" You mean, where is the family sepulchre ? I should think it would be in the Campo Santo : it is not here. But I can show you the house of STRADIVARI the *avocat*, it is number three in the Corso Porta Roma," and he politely came out of the cathedral and showed me the way.

I shall now get on the scent. This advocate is no doubt a descendant ; he will be able to tell me all that is known. I rang at the bell. Alas ! the advocate was out of town, gone to Milan, so were all the family.

I got into another cab.

" Do you know the Piazza of Domenico ? " I said, this time approaching the subject warily.

247. THE CITIZENS OF CREMONA. " There is no such place, Signor." This fairly staggered me.

" Well," I said, " I know the church has been pulled down, but can you show me where it stood ? "

" Ah ! " said the man, " yes ; they call it now the Piazza Roma."

" 'Tis this abominable centralising spirit," I growled to myself ; " this conecited new country, this pert Italia Una ; can they not leave Tuscany alone ? Piazza Roma ! forsooth, what has Roma got to do with Cremona ? I don't mind yonder VIA GARIBALDI, for he did as much for the north as for the south ; and VICTOR EMANUEL may have his statue here too, for he was a gallant Piedmontese ; but why is Rome to come in and rub out the square sacred to St. Dominic,

and destroy the very name dear to the memories and sacred to the sepulchres of the AMATI and of STRADIVARIUS?"

"Drive," I said, "to that square," and he drove.

Then I stopped, and stood up in the carriage, and accosted my man much as follows: "My friend, do you not know that in this ancient square of St. Dominic lived and worked those great violin-makers who have made your city famous throughout the world, and that here somewhere is still the house of the greatest of them, STRADIVARIUS? Can you not show me that house?"

"Signor," said the man, not wishing to appear ignorant, "I think that the person you mean who made violins is dead. He died some years ago; I don't know his house, but here is a man passing."

"Pst! stop him!" I cried; so he stopped him.

"We seek," I said, "the house of the great STRADIVARIUS."

"Indeed," replied this citizen of Cremona, "I have heard of him, but I fear he is dead. He made fiddles—old fiddles. Pst!" said the man, stopping another passer-by. "Do you know anything of one STRADIVARIUS, who made fiddles—old fiddles?"

I was still standing up in my carriage, and we now had quite a little crowd round us. They were all Cremonese. Some had heard of the advocate STRADIVARI, no one knew anything of the immortal ANTONIUS STRADIVARIUS of Cremona, although scarce 150 years ago his body had been laid

in the little chapel of the Rosary (since pulled down with the church), in all probability was still lying but a short stone's-throw off the little group that stood round my carriage ; yet, not a soul knew his name.

At last one man stepped forward and said, "Sir, if STRADIVARIUS has been dead some time, and you seek his relics, the antiquary round the corner might have heard of him." This was all I could gather.

"A thousand thanks ! " I lifted my hat, the little crowd lifted theirs.

"Drive," I said, "to the antiquary ! "

He drove ; the antiquary was out, but his wife directed us to a certain house in a side street not far from the square of St. Dominic. I drew up in front of that house. Two men looked out of one window, three girls looked out of another.

"Is this," I shouted, "the house of STRADIVARIUS ? "

"No, the advocate——"

"Stop," I cried, "do not speak of him ; I seek not the advocate—I know where he lives—I seek the house of the great STRADIVARIUS" (I turned to the girls), "a maker of violins ! "

"He doesn't live here, he's dead. He doesn't make violins," they said, laughing.

Then another roguish maiden, with eyes full of mischief : "Yes, this is his house ; he used to live here ; he died here."

“Then, may I come up? I want to see that room where he died.”

Another young lady here put her head out: two of them were for letting me come up, and the others seemed neutral.

“Look here!” said an elderly grey-headed man at another window; “If the gentleman wants anything, I will come down—wait. I know,” said he, “whom you seek—do not attend to these light-headed girls—you seek the house of STRADIVARIUS, who made the famous violins; he died more than a hundred years ago; his house is still on the Piazza, nearly opposite where the old church of St. Dominic stands. It is not here, but this is the interesting manufactory of SIGNOR CERITO; we will show it you, too, if you have time.”

“I pray you,” said I, “as my time is short, tell me where is the *casa* of the great STRADIVARI.”

“Signor, it is No. 2 Piazza Roma.”

“I thank you from my heart,” I said with a sigh of infinite relief and a low bow to all the heads out of the windows. Then to my coachman, “Drive,” I said, “to No. 2 Piazza Roma.” He drove.

A bright boy of the middle classes, well dressed and polite, opened the door.

248.       “Tell me,” I said; “I would see the rooms  
I ENTER THE      where STRADIVARI used to live.”  
HOUSE OF  
STRADIVARIUS.    “Come in,” said he; “I dare say they will

let you come up; there is nothing much to see; he died here."

I entered the narrow passage; beyond it there was a little square court-yard paved with old flagstones. To the left, a narrow dark staircase led up to the second story. I could no longer doubt that I was in the house of STRADIVARIUS—indeed, the only traditional direction I had come to Cremona with was "in the Square of St. Dominico, opposite the Façade," and this house was quite near enough to correspond to that description. At the top of the first flight, a beautiful Italian girl made her appearance—the boy said she was his sister—then an elder brother, then another boy. This was all the family I saw—it was enough; they were evidently intelligent tradespeople, and knew enough for my purpose. The young man said, "The Professor——"

"Who is the Professor?" I asked.

"The Professor STRADIVARIUS," he answered, "who made violins—but ever so long ago—inhabited these rooms, and he died here, but we cannot tell which room he died in."

"It matters not," said I; "where did he work?"

"Do you really want to see where he made the violins? We never go up there—it is very dirty—but if you will see, you must ascend."

I went first, followed by the little family, who evidently thought me quite eccentric, but were extremely polite. Higher and higher; at last we came to the top of the house.

“It’s higher still,” said the boy, and he pointed to a little decayed ladder which at a glance I could see was only used for certain fowls to roost on. It was very dirty: but the boy went up, and I followed; even the pretty sister gathered up her skirts daintily and joined us; the young man came last. Through a trap-door covered with cobwebs I soon emerged on to a sort of loft about twelve feet square. It was still soundly roofed with tiles and fine old beams and rafters. It was entirely exposed to light and air on the north and the west, like an open barn, but walled on the south, with two windows, and walled on the east; heavy rafters went all round, supported on solid upright beams. “Here,” said my host, “is where the Professor made the violins.”

I thought of the gorgeous studios in which our modern artists and sculptors think it necessary to work. I looked

249. round, and I saw all the conditions which  
STRADI-  
VARIUS’S  
WORKSHOP. STRADIVARIUS required to produce those beautiful creations—miracles of carving, design, and subtle cabinet-work—which are still the delight of collectors who seldom hear them, of players who find in them a soul of matchless sensibility, of makers who copy endlessly without ever being able to reproduce them, and of the whole musical world which has long hung spell-bound upon their magical vibrations.

I looked, and looked again. The genial and kindly

Italian family standing there with me observed that I was absorbed and serious, and, with the kindest courtesy, kept silent. And I saw out upon the north the wide blue sky, and upon the west the wide blue sky just mellowing to a rich purple, and flaked here and there with orange streaks prophetic of sunset. Whenever STRADIVARIUS looked up from his work—if he looked north, his eye fell on the old towers of St. Marcellino and St. Omobono; if he looked west, the cathedral, with its tall campanile, rose dark against the sky—and what a sky!—full of clear sun in the morning, full of pure heat all day, and bathed with ineffable tints in the cool of the evening, when the light lay low upon viney and hanging garden, or spangled with ruddy gold the eaves, the roofs, and frescoed walls of the houses.

Yes, after all, the conditions were good—good for distilling the rare gums in the natural heat; good for soaking the oil and varnish into the backs and bellies and ribs of maple and deal; good for drying leisurely day by day every polished and moulded surface and smooth strip as it hung up against the open blue sky, winnowed by the light winds as they rose and fell with spicy odours from the distant Alps.

Here, up in the high air, with the sun his helper, the light his minister, the blessed soft airs his journeymen, what time the workaday noise of the city rose, and the sound of Matins and Vespers was in his ears, through the long warm summer days worked STRADIVARIUS, drew in the clear light his curves of strength and beauty, cut with

free hand his scrolls, rounded and chiselled with a loving eye those surfaces which resemble nothing so much as the gentle and undulating curves and satiny texture of a smooth human body. From this high laboratory, where the master seemed so far above the earth, so near to Heaven, I said it was meet that such melodious and seraphic ministers should descend to be the delight and solace of our sad and discordant world. Here was shaped the “Pucelle”; here was conceived the graceful, sweet, and ringing “Dolphin” Strad.; here, too, was formed and perfected that wondrous violin which, in the hands of ERNST, and never since, drew tears and laughter from enchanted multitudes, until it was difficult to believe that the spirits of the dead were not employing its pathetic vibrations to convey to mortals the expression of their infinite longings and ineffable aspirations.

I suppose my eyes were raised involuntarily as I stood facing the north, looking over a wilderness of roofs to

the great churches beyond. The young man

250. *A NAIL IN A BEAM.* evidently thought I was looking at the thick beam that supported the roof on that side. He climbed up so as to touch it, and felt along the inside. “Here,” he said, “the Professor hung up his violins. You can see how old and worn is the beam; and here and there is a crooked rusty nail on which the violins hung.”

A sudden thought worthy of a Vandal seized me: “I will possess one of those nails.” I at once invented several

excuses for myself, some of them very good ones. 1st. No one else cared for the nail. 2nd. It would simply rot there and be lost. 3rd. Probably no one would ever notice it again if left. 4th. No one would miss it. 5th. STRADIVARIUS would not want it again. 6th. I wanted it myself. This last was the best excuse I could think off. So I said to the young man, "Whilst you are up there, do you know, I should very much value one of those old nails; could you get it for me?"

"Certainly," said he, "if you want it; but it is so very old and rotten, I can't draw it; it is sure to break."

"Never mind," said I. He did not mind. The nail did break, and I got all of it that STRADIVARIUS ever used to hang his fiddles on.

My mission was accomplished. I looked round upon that simple, kindly, picturesque Italian family—the young man, his two young brothers, the pretty sister.

251.      "What shall I say to thank you for your  
"ADDIO!"      kindness to me?"

"Nothing," said the young man, laughing; "we don't want anything: we are glad if you are pleased; people don't often come to see the house—just one or two have been at long intervals."

"At least," I said, "let me give these nice little boys something to buy toys with, for they opened the door and have been such good little guides;" and I placed a few

francs in the hands of the astonished little fellows, who seemed doubtful ; but the pretty sister laughed, and they took the francs with many joyful salutations.

As I went down-stairs, I met the grey-headed man who had told me of the house coming up. He had actually, with true Italian curiosity, come all the way to see if I had really gone there.

“ So, so ! ” he said, “ you have found the house where the Professor once lived ? ”

“ Yes,” I said ; “ I have seen the house of STRADIVARIUS. Addio ! ”

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## VI.

## INTERLUDE

## ON SOME OLD VIOLIN PLAYERS.

WHETHER violins are due to violinists, or violinists to violins, is like that other puzzle of whether the owl was before the egg, or the egg before the owl. Thus  
252. *VIOLINS AND VIOLINISTS.* much, however, is certain : that until that special modification of the viol which we call violin was hit upon, there could not be a violin-player; so we may affirm that, in a sense, the violin preceded violinists. It is equally certain that the growth of part-singing, and the advancing art of modern music, rendered the players of stringed instruments impatient with the tubby tone and clumsy proportions of the old viols, and that, in order to satisfy the increasing demand for tone and quality, the violin-makers tried various experiments, until at last they hit upon the violin type, improving their instruments to order as

ERARD and BROADWOOD were forced to increase the strength, mechanism, and tone of their pianos to meet the extraordinary, and apparently insatiable, requirements of LISZT and THALBERG.

GIOVANNI BATTISTA LULLI, 1590, about whom I know little more, was the first man who asserted, by his excellent

<sup>253.</sup>  
LULLI

playing, the superiority of the new violin over the old viols. With LULLI (1633–1687) the

“petit violon” became fashionable at the French Court. LULLI was a cook, but the COMTE DE NOGENT, hearing him play in the kitchen, brought him straight to MADAME DE MONTPENSIER, and he was soon afterwards installed as Court musician to LOUIS XIV. The “Petits Violons du Roi”—the name of a Court band organised by LULLI—soon became famous. LULLI himself was not only a good cook and fine fiddler, but an excellent actor and a merry fellow to boot.

MOLIÈRE was very partial to him, and would say in company, when the conversation flagged, “Come, Battista, make us laugh.”

I find it impossible to make out wherein LULLI’s violin-playing excelled that of his predecessors; but as there were during his life-time no two opinions on that question, I must take it for granted in his favour.

With CORELLI (1653–1713) I touch firmer ground. We

can see at a glance that he was contemporaneous with the finest period of STRADIVARIUS. As a contrast to

254.  
CORELLI. the French butterfly LULLI, CORELLI was "un homme sérieux." His style was elaborate and

methodical; his music full of a fancy and variety which even the stiffness of the old form cannot disguise. His trios form the basis of modern chamber music, and his *concertos* laid the foundation of the grand violin style.

He was the first *maestro* who insisted on his band all bowing in the same way. The fine effect thus produced is seldom, if ever, heard in England. We must go to Vienna and Paris to see that uniform *Coup d'archét* which, in an orchestra, is as striking to the eye as it is agreeable to the ear. CORELLI met HANDEL at the house of that famous patron of music, CARDINAL OTTOBONI, at Rome. The great violinist took an odd view of HANDEL's genius. "My dear Saxon," he said to him, "your music is in the French style, which I do not understand." CORELLI's interview with another illustrious professor was far from fortunate. He seems at Naples to have met SCARLATTI and played one of his adagios in C major instead of C minor. On discovering his error, he was so much annoyed, that he left the town immediately. He was very sensitive to rivalry, and had the mortification—like most great executive musicians who go on too long—to see younger artists preferred to himself. Posterity has been more kind. His body lies close to that

of RAFFAELE in the Pantheon. His tablet is inscribed with the simple but conclusive motto :

*“Corelli princeps musicorum.”*

Between 1640 and 1729 we had some very good violin players in England. One BALTZAR led the king's (CHARLES

255. II.) band. His execution was wonderful. He <sup>BALTZAR AND THE BANNISTERS.</sup> was a sad drunkard, and they buried him in Westminster Abbey. The BANNISTERS, father and son, in 1672, proves that Englishmen could also play the violin. They started a concert, “1s. admission, and call for what you please.” The fiddling was held at the “George Tavern,” Whitefriars. BANNISTER himself did wonders on the flageolet, violin, and double-bass, and each performer had his solo. The concerts took place in the dark winter afternoons, and, by all accounts, the game seems to have been fairly worth the candle.

TARTINI (1692–1770) added that element of romance and fancy to violin playing, without which, in my opinion, the

256.  
TARTINI. most classical violinist fails as a true exponent of his instrument or his art. TARTINI's method was elaborate and concise. To him we owe that attention to exact intonation which raises the violin strings to an equality with the sensibility of the vocal chords. His observation of the *third* sound which resonates sympatheti-

cally when the two upper notes of a chord of three are in perfect time, and the great stress which he laid on this, points to the perfection of his ear. He made his pupils listen for the effect.

"If you do not perceive the *third* sound, your thirds and sixths are not in tune," he would say.

TARTINI lengthened the bow. The violin bow grew until it attained at last the PAGANINI and ERNST dimensions of a yard long. At first it resembled more the chopper-like implement still used for grunting on the double-bass. It would be difficult to play the famous *Trille du Diable*—the best known of TARTINI's compositions, which still holds the concert-room—with the old-fashioned bow used by CORELLI or HAZZE. TARTINI's own account, though a little stale, of the way in which he composed his famous solo, may as well be quoted, as it is not always that we can get a legend first hand.

"One night, 1713," he writes, "I dreamt that I had made a compact with the devil, who promised to be at my service on all occasions. Everything I undertook succeeded; my wishes were anticipated, and my desires always surpassed. At last I determined to offer the devil my violin, as I was anxious to know what kind of a fiddler he might be. To my astonishment he played a solo so beautiful, with such exquisite taste and finish, that never had I heard or conceived of anything so lovely and marvellous. Overcome with surprise and delight, I held my breath, and

the effort awoke me. I seized my violin in the hope of recalling the magic strains—in vain! Still, a vague impression remained, which I instantly endeavoured to jot down. *My Sonata del Diavolo* is the result. It is doubtless the best of all my compositions."

Closely allied to the romantic element is TARTINI's last contribution to the progress of violin playing, his power of exquisite "phrasing." He was the finest cantabile player of his day. NARDINI, his best pupil, carried on the tradition, for in the "adagio" he had no equal after TARTINI's death. TARTINI died at Padua, where he had lived for nearly fifty years. He was a great philosopher, a great lover of books, a mathematician, and a man of highly religious and philanthropic character. He had seen CORELLI, lived long enough to admire HANDEL, play HAYDN, and even hear MOZART. He left many pupils, amongst them a lady—MDLLE. DE SIRMEN—who achieved a European reputation, and was by some preferred to all his other pupils.

GIARDINI (1716–1793) was famous for his "embroideries." This, I suppose, consisted in those elegant flourishes and cadenzas which, in the hands of PAGANINI and his school on the violin, and in the hands of CHOPIN and his school on the piano, received their latest and apparently ultimate developments. Towards the end of GIARDINI's life, the great qualities of the STRADIVARI and GUARNERII

violins were beginning to assert themselves. The quartets of HAYDN had immensely enhanced the dignity of the violin. A demand for tone was rapidly arising, and GIARDINI was as famous for the sweep of his bow and the sonority of his tone, as for the delicacy and charm of his “embroideries.”

BOCCHERINI, by the enormous number of his compositions, did much to spread the taste for chamber music.

A fragment or two of his compositions may occasionally be heard at the Monday Popular Concerts. He was a favourite with princes, and composed nine works annually for the Royal Academy of Madrid, where he died, aged sixty-six, in 1806, three years before the death of HAYDN. The KING OF SPAIN was fond of playing with BOCCHERINI, and the EMPEROR OF AUSTRIA occasionally joined them in a trio. The Emperor one day asked BOCCHERINI whether he played better than CHARLES IV.; upon which the diplomatic musician replied, “Sire, CHARLES IV. plays like a king, but Your Imperial Highness plays like an Emperor!” It would be impossible to say less, but difficult to say more. It was the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

Most people are agreed that VIOTTI (1755–1824) was the man who summed up in himself the progress of the

violin in the 18th century, and made possible the startling

258. developments which are connected with the

**VIOTTI,** names of DE BERIOT, and, above all, with PAGA-

**DE BERIOT.** NINI and ERNST. VIOTTI prolonged further the

bow. In his days the internal bar supporting the old violin bellies had to be strengthened to bear the increased strain of the gradually rising pitch which gave such additional brilliancy to violin tone. His tone was powerful, his style broad, and his phrasing noble.

He wrote music abounding in flowing melody and pleasant harmonies. His concertos long held the concert-room, but were ousted by RODE, then by DE BERIOT, who, in his turn, was displaced by ERNST, WIENIAWSKI, and VIEUXTEMPS.

DE BERIOT had a very considerable run of about fifty years, for his music has only disappeared from concert programmes within the last ten years, and is still popular with novices.

PAGANINI's music cannot be said to have displaced that of any concert-room composer. Only a few of his concertos were ever heard after his death, generally played by SIVORI, and then no one pretended that they sounded the same as when PAGANINI played them.

RODE, MORI, and LABARRE, were all pupils of VIOTTI. MORI taught my old master, OURY, in his youth, and OURY numbered amongst his pupils GEORGE MACFARREN, STERNDALE BENNETT, and the EARL OF FALMOUTH, an excellent amateur.

I have now entered upon the golden age of violinists. KREUTZER produced studies for the violin which are already

259. classical, and which, in my opinion, have never KREUTZER, been surpassed in excellence, variety, and even SPOHR, PAGANINI. fine musical taste. I have no intention here to mention all the celebrated names of violinists which are, unfortunately, to modern ears little but names; only those who serve as landmarks of the art deserve, as it were, a bust and pedestal in the corridor through which I am now passing, to contemplate at leisure the great figure which stands at the end of it—NICOLO PAGANINI.

I suppose that SPOHR's violin school is likely to hold its place as a comprehensive class book, though I am told that modern professors have a perfect mania for introducing shorter manuals of their own invention. However, no one can ignore the fact that SPOHR did more than any of his predecessors to overcome the difficulties of chromatic scales, octave, and chord-playing on the violin, although his curious antipathy to harmonies and everything that savoured of trickery on the violin left the field open to PAGANINI.

They were both born in the same year, 1784, and it is pleasing to note PAGANINI's generous appreciation and sincere respect for SPOHR's abilities, whilst it would be difficult to mention two artists more diametrically opposed to each other in taste, temperament, and achievement. When PAGANINI burst like a comet upon the musical world, DE BERIOT had already reaped his laurels in England,

and, notwithstanding the unique popularity of PAGANINI, DE BERIOT, by his compositions, as well as by the charm of his phrasing, the roundness of his tone, and the exquisite purity of his taste, retained his hold over the musical public until his eye-sight began to fail him, and his nerve gave way. He married MALIBRAN, who was bled to death by the doctors, and he died at St. Petersburg, quite blind, only in 1870. DE BERIOT's name is intimately associated with the great violin school of Belgium, over which the lamented VIEUXTEMPS presided so ably for so many years. I now wish to concentrate the attention of my readers upon that imposing personality—that strange uncouth figure which stands out unique amongst the executive musicians of the 19th century. Nothing like him seems ever to have appeared before—nothing approaching him as a solo sensation, except LISZT, has appeared since. At one bound he reached a goal of violin-playing to which, after an interval of nearly fifty years, there seems to be no beyond. He sounded the marvellous depths and resources of the most marvellous of all instruments, and has apparently left nothing for future explorers to discover.

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## VIII.

## PAGANINI.

WHO is this man who rises up suddenly in the world of music, and whose fame passes with the brightness and rapidity of a meteor through the civilised world ;

260. A NEW APPARITION. who, at the moment when BAILLOT, SPOHR, RODE, and LAFONT seemed to have explored the heights and depths of the violin, opened up new vistas full of strange, unparalleled mysteries, and gave us glimpses into a hell, purgatory, and paradise beyond the dreams even of DANTE—whose gaunt and supernatural figure startled and fascinated the crowds that thronged about him, a solitary man amongst men, but so unlike them, that he seemed to belong to another race, and to discourse in the weird music of another world—who bowed to none, yet was idolised by all—whose engagements were negotiated by kings and ministers—who could spurn the prayers of princes and grand duchesses, and yet received honour at their hands, and was alternately decorated by the Pope, and anathematized by the clergy ;—who was this exceptional being reigning supreme for forty years without a rival over the conflicting schools of Italy, Germany, and France,

at whose approach the greatest masters confessed themselves vanquished — who, although he set the fashions, infected whole populations, invented a new school, yet, in his own peculiar greatness, had no masters, no equals, and has left no followers ? This man, who has stamped so indelible an impression of himself upon the musical world, whilst his name will survive as the synonym of wonder and mystery to the remote ages—this Hercules of the Violin was NICOLO PAGANINI.

That a man's grandmother, or even his father and mother, are of some consequence when he derives lustre or gain from

261. them of any kind, no one will deny ; but when  
PAGANINI PÈRE ET MÈRE. he sheds back upon them the only kind of reflex glory which they are capable of receiving, the glory of an imperishable name, no one will blame the biographer for skipping a few dull and stupid antecedents.

PAGANINI *père* may have been a street porter, as some pretend ; or a small tradesman, as others, probably in the right, affirm. He was a sharp man ; he was a cruel man ; he did overmuch to develop his son's talents, and overmuch to ruin his health, and, probably, is chargeable with having destroyed his mental and moral equilibrium for life. NICOLO's mother was a sweet, amiable woman—she loved her boy, she believed in him, she often stood between him and the rod, she prayed for him, and saw one night in a

vision a celestial being, who told her that the boy would become the greatest violinist that ever lived. How far this dream, which she lost no time in communicating to father and son, increased the father's severity, and fired the boy's ambition, we cannot tell; but the dream seems to have been a well-established fact, and years afterwards, when the mother was old, and the son at his zenith, she reminded him of it, as of an incident which had been familiar to both of them throughout their lives.

In these early days of boyhood were probably laid the seeds of that idiosyncrasy of temperament which became at

262. once the glory and curse of his life. Little as

SEVERE we know about the human brain, it is tolerably  
EARLY

TRAINING. certain that its particles move in physical grooves and acquire methodical arrangements, which correspond to what we call mental qualities and states of mind. Illness may perpetuate some, and modify others. Great severity may have a similar effect; recurrent outward action, for instance, may create intense propensity in certain directions, and thus impart the perseverance of mania to inward dispositions; the nervous system at the same time, if it does not break down, becomes over-developed, and is then endowed with an almost supernatural sensibility. Something of this kind appears to have been the case with PAGANINI; he was by nature very delicate. At four years old he was nearly buried alive; he lay for a whole day

in a state of catalepsy, and was already placed in his shroud, when he revived, but with a nervous system which from that time forward showed signs of a strange and unnatural susceptibility. By his own temperament, as soon as he could hold the violin he was urged to an intense and dangerous application—for the least fault he was severely beaten by his father, which seemed only to increase an ardour which should, for his own sake, have been rather moderated. Precocity was still further forced on by starvation. Had it not been for his mother, he might never have survived this brutal treatment. We shall see by-and-by how lovingly he remembered her in the midst of his triumphs.

PAGANINI was born at Genoa on the 10th February 1784. After exhausting his father's instruction, he was taken in hand by SIGNOR SERVETTO, of the THE DESPAIR OF HIS MASTERS. Genoese theatre; then GIACOMO COSTA, chapel master, taught him, and the child was often seen playing in the Genoese churches on a violin almost as large as himself; but, like MOZART before him, and MENDELSSOHN after him, NICOLO was the despair of his masters, who were in turn angry with his innovations, and astonished at his precocious facility. In his ninth year he appeared at a concert, and electrified everyone with variations on the French air, *La Carmagnole*. This triumph impelled his avaricious father to discover someone who could

further teach him ; the young talent was to be pressed and squeezed to its utmost limit, in order to produce the golden harvest.

At Parma lived the celebrated musician ROLLA. To ROLLA was the boy taken ; but ROLLA was ill. Whilst waiting in the ante-room little NICOLO took up a violin, and played off at sight some difficult music which he found lying on the table. The invalid composer raised himself on his bed to listen, and eagerly inquired who the great master was who had arrived, and was playing in his ante-room ? “A mere lad !—impossible !” but on PAGANINI’s making his appearance as an humble pupil, ROLLA at once told him that he could teach him nothing. Thence to PAËR, who was glad to make his difficult charge over to GHIRETTI, and this master gave him three lessons a week in harmony and counterpoint. It is not clear that this extraordinary genius owed much more to anyone but himself—his indomitable perseverance and his incessant study. His method is to be noted. For ten or twelve hours he would try passages over and over again in different ways with such absorption and intensity, that at nightfall he would sink into utter prostration through excessive exhaustion and fatigue. Though delicate, like MENDELSSOHN, he ate at times ravenously, and slept soundly. When about ten he wrote twenty-four fugues, and soon afterwards composed some violin music, of such difficulty, that he was unable at first to play it, until incessant practice gave him the mastery.

In 1797 PAGANINI, being then thirteen years old, made his first professional tour; but not as a free agent. His father

264. took him through the chief towns of Lombardy,  
PLAYING AND GAMBLING. and, not unnaturally, prescribed the task and pocketed the proceeds. But the young neck was already beginning to chafe against the yoke. In 1798 he escaped, with his father's tardy consent, to Lucca, where a musical festival in honour of St. Martin was going on. He there gave frequent concerts, and was everywhere met with applause, and, what was more to the purpose, with money. Surrounded by men of inferior talents, a mere inexperienced boy, without education, without knowledge of the world, with nothing but ambition and his supreme musical genius, he now broke wildly away from all wise restraints, and avenged himself upon his father's severity by many youthful excesses. He gambled—he lost—he was duped by his companions; but he made money so fast, that he soon owned about £1,000. It is pleasant to think that he at once thought of giving some of this to his father and mother; it is unpleasant to record that his father claimed, and eventually got, almost the whole sum from him. But it did not much matter now, for everything seemed literally to turn into gold beneath those marvellous fingers, and bad luck proved nearly as profitable to him as good.

By the time he had reached seventeen, PAGANINI was a confirmed gambler. He had little left but his Stradi-

varius violin, and this he was on the point of selling to a

265. certain prince, who had offered him £80, a large

HOW HE LOST  
AND WON  
VIOLINS. sum at the beginning of this century even

for a Stradivarius. Times have changed, and in these latter days we think nothing of giving £300 for a genuine instrument of the first class. But the reckless youth determined to make a last stand for his violin. "Jewels, watch, rings, brooches," to use his own words, "I had disposed of all—my thirty francs were reduced to three. With this small remains of my capital I played, and won 160 francs ! This amount saved my violin, and restored my affairs. From that time," he adds, "I abjured gaming, to which I had sacrificed a part of my youth, convinced that a gamester is an object of contempt to all well-regulated minds." The violin he narrowly missed losing was given him by PARSINI the painter, who on one occasion brought, him a concerto of extraordinary difficulty to read at sight, and, placing a fine Stradivarius in his hands, said, "This instrument shall be yours if you can play that concerto at first sight in a masterly manner." "If that is the case," replied PAGANINI, "you may bid adieu to it"; and, playing it off at once, he retained the violin. Easy come—easy go. Some years later, at Leghorn, being again in great straits, he was obliged to part, for a time at least, with this same Stradivarius; but this disaster was only the means of procuring him the favourite Guarnerius, upon which he ever afterwards played. In his need, Monsieur LIVRON, a dis-

tinguished amateur, lent him this splendid instrument, and was so enraptured by his playing that he exclaimed, "Never will I profane the strings that your fingers have touched. It is to you that my violin belongs." This violin is still shown at Genoa under a glass case.

At the age of seventeen *PAGANINI* appears to have been entirely his own master—weak in health, nervous, irritable,

266. and excitable; his wild and irregular habits and

A RESPITE FROM TOIL. pursuits were, at this critical age, threatening to hurry him to an early grave, when an event occurred which, although but too characteristic of the looseness of Italian manners, probably saved his life.

Suddenly, in the midst of new discoveries and unexampled successes, *PAGANINI* ceased to play the violin. He retired into the depths of the country, and devoted himself for three years to agricultural pursuits, and to the society of a lady of rank who had carried him off to her Tuscan estate, and to the guitar. With the sole exception of the late *REGONDI*, no such genius had ever been concentrated upon this limited and effeminate instrument. But the lady's taste ran that way, and the great violinist lavished for a time the whole force of his originality and skill upon the light guitar. He wrote music for it, and imitated it on the violin, but seldom touched it in after life until quite the close, although, as we shall presently see, he was able to produce a prodigious effect upon it when he chose.

These years of country life and leisure, during which he was delivered from the pressure of crowds, the excitement of public performances, and, most of all, the grinding anxieties of life, had the effect of bracing him up in health, and prepared him for that reaction towards intense study and exhausting toil which left him without a rival—the first violinist in the world.

In 1804 he returned to Genoa, where he seems, amongst other things, to have given lessons to a young girl of fifteen,

267. named CATHERINE CALCAGNO, who appears to

have caught something of his style, and to have <sup>STUDY AND</sup> COMPOSITION. astonished Italy for a few years, but after 1816 we hear no more of her. And now the neglected violin was taken up once again, but this time with maturer powers and settled intentions. There is a strange thoroughness about PAGANINI—nothing which any previous musician knew or had done must be unknown or left undone by him; there was to be no hitting him between the joints of his armour; no loop-hole of imperfection anywhere. He now occupied himself solely with the study of his instrument, and with composition—wrote four grand quartettes for violin, viol, guitar, and violoncello; and bravura variations with guitar accompaniment. At the age of twenty-one (1805) he made a second professional tour, passing through Lucca and Piombino, and in one convent church where he played a concerto, the excitement was so

great that the monks had to leave their seats to silence the uproar in the congregation. It was at the end of this tour that NAPOLEON's sister, the PRINCESS ELIZA, offered the new violinist the direction of the Court music, and gave him the grade of captain in the Royal Guard, with the privilege of wearing that officer's brilliant uniform on state occasions.

Between 1805 and 1812, whilst in the service of the PRINCESS ELIZA, afterwards GRAND DUCHESS OF TUSCANY,

268. PAGANINI probably reached his acme of power, FEELING if not of fame. He had for years been at work AFTER EFFECT. upon new effects and combinations, but, at the very time when each new exploit was being greeted with frantic applause, he betook himself to an exhaustive study of the old masters. Something he seemed to be groping after—some clue he wished to find. How often had he thrown over VIOTTI, PUGNANI, KREUTZER, how often had he returned to their works! All were found utterly inadequate to suggest to him a single fresh thought, and it was nothing short of a new world that he was bound to discover.

In studying the ninth work of LOCATELLI, entitled *L'Arte de Nuova Modulazione* his brain was set suddenly agoing in the peculiar direction of his new aspirations. Every original genius seeks some such clue or point of departure. Something in LOCATELLI's method inflamed

PAGANINI with those conceptions of simultaneous notes struck in different parts of the instrument; the hitherto unknown management of the screws, in which the violin was tuned all sorts of ways to reach effects never heard before or since; the harmonic flying out at all points, the arpeggios and pizzicatos, of which more anon; these which were in after years brought to such perfection, were born out of infinite study and practice, under the stimulating influence of the GRAND DUCHESS and her Court.

It is at this season of his life that PAGANINI appears most like other people; the idol of the Court, untouched as yet

269. by any definite malady, occupying an official

PLAYING ON post, and systematically labouring to perfect a ONE STRING.

talent which already seemed too prodigious to belong to any one man,—all conditions seemed most favourable to his peace and pleasure, could they have only lasted, but this was not possible. They continued until he had achieved the last step in the ladder of consummate skill, and no longer. Probably all his executive peculiarities were developed at this time. It was at Florence, for instance (and not in a prison), that PAGANINI first played upon only two—the first and fourth—strings, and then upon one—the fourth—string. Being in love with a lady of the Court, who reciprocated his attachment, he gave out that he would depict upon his violin a *Scène Amoureuse*; the treble string, we presume, was the lady, and the fourth string the gentle-

man. The emotional dialogue was carried on between the two in a manner which fairly overcame the audience with delight, and led to the GRAND DUCHESS requesting him to try one string alone next time. How he succeeded in that exploit is known to all the world, for he ever afterwards retained an extreme partiality for the fourth string.

In 1808 he obtained from the GRAND DUCHESS leave to travel. His fame had preceded him. Leghorn, where seven

270. years before he had forfeited his famous Stradi-

HIS PRODIGIOUS FACILITY. varius and won a Guarnerius, received him with

open arms, although his appearance was marked by an amusing *contretemps*. He came on to the stage limping, having run a nail into his heel. At all times odd-looking, he, no doubt, looked all the more peculiar under these circumstances, and there was some tittering among the audience. Just as he began, the candles fell out of his desk—more laughter. He went on playing, the first string broke—more laughter. He played the rest of the concerto through on three strings, but the laughter now changed to vociferous applause at this feat. The beggarly elements seemed of little consequence to this magician. One or more strings, it was all the same to him ; indeed, it is recorded, that he seldom paused to mend his strings when they broke, which they not unfrequently did. Whether from abstraction or carelessness he would allow them at times to grow quite ragged on the finger board, and his

constant practice of plucking them, guitar-like, with the left hand, as well as harp-like with the fore-finger of the right hand, helped, no doubt, to wear them out rapidly.

At Ferrara both he and his violin met with a different reception. A singer had failed him, and he had induced

271. a *danseuse* who had a pretty voice to come to the

*A NARROW ESCAPE.* rescue. Some graceless fellow in the audience

hissed her singing, which caused PAGANINI to take a revenge little suited to the occasion. In his last solo he imitated the cries of various animals, and suddenly advancing to the foot-lights, caused his violin to bray like an ass, with the exclamation, "This is for him who hissed!" Instead of laughter, the pit rose in fury, and would have soon made short work of him and his violin, had he not escaped by a back door. It appears that the country folk round Ferrara called the town's people, whom they hated, "asses," and were in the habit of singing out "hee-haw!" whenever they had to allude to them, hence the angry reception of PAGANINI's musical repartee.

We get but fugitive glances of the great artist during this professional tour, but it is too true that at Turin he

272. was attacked with that bowel complaint which

*HIS APPEARANCE.* ever afterwards haunted him like an evil demon, causing him the most frightful and protracted suffering, and interrupting his career sometimes for months

together. His distrust of doctors, and love of quack medicines, no doubt made matters worse, and from this time his strange appearance grew stranger, his pallor more livid, his gauntness and thinness more spectral and grotesque, whilst greatly, no doubt, in consequence of suffering, his face assumed that look of eagle sharpness, sometimes varied by a sardonic grin, or a look of almost demoniacal fury, which artists have caricatured, and sculptors have tried to tone down. Indeed, he must have been altogether an exceptional being to behold in the flesh. People who knew him say that the figure which used still to be exhibited at MADAME TUSSAUD'S, some twenty-five years ago, was a remarkable likeness. He looked like an indifferently dressed skeleton, with a long parchment face, deep dark eyes, full of flame, long lank hair, straggling down over his shoulders. His walk was shambling and awkward, the bones seem to have been badly strung together, he appeared as if he had been fixed up hastily on wires and the wires had got loose. As he stood, he settled himself on one hip, at a gaunt angle, and before he began, the whole business looked so unpromising, that men wondered how he could hold his violin at all, much less play it!

It must have been at his first visit to Florence, before his appearance was familiar, as it afterwards became, to the inhabitants of that city, that we get one of those side-views of the man which are more precious than many dates and drier details.

Slowly recovering from illness, PAGANINI repaired to Florence, probably in May of the year 1809. He must have

then lived in almost complete solitude, as he does

273.  
*A MEETING.* not appear to have been recognised there before the month of October, when he was officially recalled to his duties by the late Princess, now Grand Duchess, at the Court of Florence.

Those who have wandered in spring-time about the environs of Florence, know the indefinite charm there is in the still and fertile country, without the walls of the city. Outside the gate of the Pitti, on the summit of a steep hill stands Fiesole, bathed in clear air and warm sunshine. How many an invalid has walked up that winding and rugged path, gathering, here and there, a sweet wild-flower, resting from time to time, to drink in the delicious air, until pure health seemed borne back to the feeble frame upon the soft and fragrant breeze.

Alone, on a bright morning, a tall, ungainly figure goes slowly up the hill towards Fiesole. He pauses at times, he looks round abstractedly. He is talking to himself out loud, unconscious of anyone near him—he gesticulates wildly—then breaks out into a loud laugh—but stops suddenly, as he sees coming down the hill a young girl, carrying one of those large baskets full of flowers so commonly seen in the streets of Florence. She is beautiful with the beauty of the Florentine girls; the brown flesh-tints mellowed with reflected light from the white road strewn thick with

marble-dust ; under the wide straw hat the free curls flow dark and thick, clustering about her temples, and lowering the forehead. Suddenly the large black eyes, so common amongst the Italian peasants, seemed transfixed with something between wonder and fear, as they fall upon the uncouth figure approaching her. In another moment, conscious of the stranger's intense gaze, she stands motionless, like a bird charmed by a serpent ; then she trembles involuntarily, from head to foot. A strange smile steals over the pale and haggard face of PAGANINI — was he, then, conscious of exercising any mesmeric power ? At times he seemed so full of some such influence that individuals, as well as crowds, were irresistibly drawn and fascinated by his look.

But the strange smile seemed to unloose the spell, the startled girl passed on, and the solitary artist resumed his walk towards Fiesole.

Heavy clouds, riven with spaces of light, were driving before the wind. Over the bridge Delle Grazie, up the

274.

hill once more without the gates of Florence, we pass towards a ruined castle. A storm seems imminent, the wind whistles, and howls round the deserted promontory, the bare ruin that has braved the storms of centuries stands up dark against the sky, and seems to exult in the fury of the elements, so much in harmony with its own wild and desolate look. But what

IN THE  
STORM.

are those low wailings? Is it the wind, or some human being in anguish? The traveller rushes forward—in a cavity of the deep ruin, amongst the tumbled stones, o'ergrown with moss and turf, lies a strange figure—a lonely, haggard man. He listens to the wind, and moans in answer, as though in pain. Is he the magician who has conjured up the tempest, and is the scene before us all unreal? or has the tempest entered into his soul, and filled him with its own sad voice? Indeed, as he lies there—his pale, almost livid face distorted, his wet hair streaming wildly about his shoulders—his uncouth form writhing with each new burst of the hurricane—he looks the very impersonation of the storm itself. But, on being observed, his look becomes fixed—the stranger insensibly recoils, and feels awkwardly the sense of intrusion. If the strange man is in pain he wants no help; thus rashly exposed to the weather, hardly recovered from his grievous malady, he may well be actually suffering, but most likely he is merely possessed for the time by certain emotions impressed upon his sensitive and electric organization by the tempest from without. He is drinking in the elemental forces which, by-and-by, he will give out with a power itself almost as elemental.

Some of us may have walked in the soft moonlight under the long avenue (*Cascine*) that runs by the brink of the rushing Arno straight out of Florence. We can re-

member how the birds love those trees, and the broken underwood beneath them. When the city sleeps

275.  
BY NIGHT.

the heart of those woods is alive, even the daylight birds are sometimes aroused by the nightingales, as they answer each other in notes of sweetness long drawn out, and tender raptures that seem to swoon and faint into the still more tender silences of the summer night. But suddenly the birds' song is checked—other strains of incomparable sweetness arise in the wood. The birds are silent, they pause and listen: the notes are like theirs, but more exquisite—they are woven by a higher art into phrases of inspiration beyond even the nightingale's gift. The strange whistler ceases, and the birds resume, timidly, their song; again the unearthly music breaks forth, and mingles with theirs. As we push apart the bushes, we discover the same weird figure that but lately lay moaning in the storm among the ruins upon yonder hill.

The person to whom we owe, substantially, the above glimpses, met this extraordinary man again in the streets

276.  
ON THE  
GUITAR.

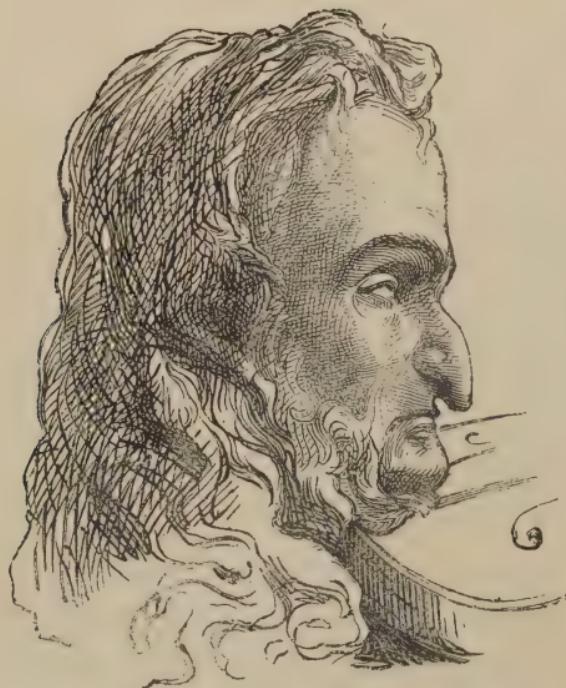
of Florence a few days later. A merry party of young people, laughing and shouting, pass by towards the Uffizzi—we listen to their ringing voices, occupied with themselves, and, youth-like, caring for nothing at the time but their own gaiety, when suddenly the voices fall, the twanging of the guitar ceases, a curious murmur runs through the merry throng, and

not a pleasant murmur ; a tall, pale man, with eyes on fire, and strange, imperious look, has pushed brusquely in amongst them. He seizes the guitar, and, sweeping its strings with passion, causes it to wail like a zither, then peal out like the strains of a military band, and finally settle into the rich chords and settled cadences of a strong harp. All resistance and murmuring ceases as the astonished party follow him, spell-bound. His cravat flies loose, his coat-tails wave madly to and fro, he gesticulates like a maniac, and the irresistible music streams forth louder, wilder, more magical than ever—he strides, leaps, dances forward with the guitar, which is no longer a guitar, but the very soul of NICOLO PAGANINI. A few days later still the mystery was cleared up. PAGANINI had been officially called to Florence by the Grand Duchess to superintend the Court concerts, and the whole of the town was soon ringing with his name.

About the age of thirty, at which time, as we shall presently narrate, PAGANINI became free never again to be

277.  
PERSONAL TRAITS. bound by any official appointment—the great violinist had exhausted all the possible resources of his instrument. From this time PAGANINI, incredible as it may appear, seldom, if ever, played, except at concerts and rehearsals, and not always even at rehearsals. If he ever practised, he always used a mute. MR. HARRIS, who for twelve months acted as his secretary, and seldom

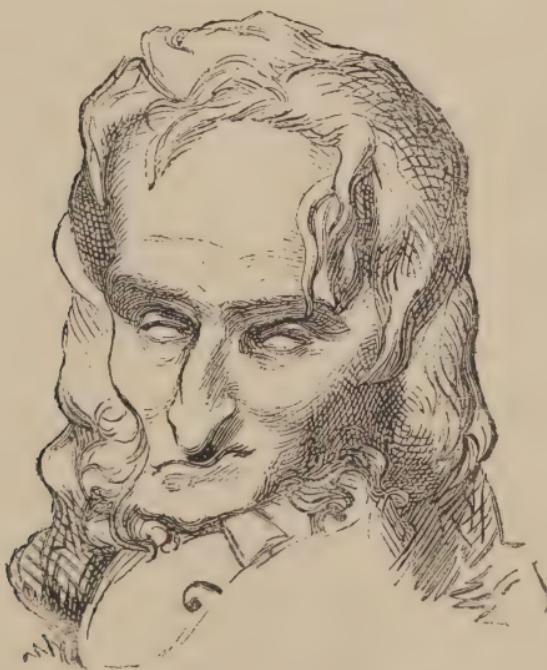
left him, *never* saw him take his violin from its case. At the hotels where he stopped the sound of his instrument was never heard. He used to say that he had worked enough, and had earned his right to repose ; yet, without an effort, he continued to overcome the superhuman difficulties which he him-



From a Bust by Danton, presented by Professor Ella to Mr. Haweis.

self had created with the same unerring facility, and ever watched by the eager and envious eyes of critics and rivals. In vain ! No false intonation, no note out of tune, no failure was ever perceptible. The *Times* critic, reviewing him in London some years before his death, says his octaves

were so true that they sounded like one note, and the most enormous intervals with triple notes, harmonics and guitar effects, seem to have been invariably taken with the same precision. In the words of a critical judge, M. FÉTIS, "his hand was a geometrical compass, which divided the finger-



From the same Bust.

board with mathematical precision." There is an amusing story told of an Englishman, who followed him from place to place, to hear him play in private, in the hope of discovering his "secret." At last, after many vain attempts, he managed to get lodged in the next room to the great

artist. Looking through the key-hole, he beheld him seated on a sofa, about to take his violin from its case—at last! He raises it to his chin—but the bow?—is left in the case. The left hand merely measures with its enormous wiry fingers a few mechanical intervals, and the instrument is replaced in silence—not even then was a note to be heard!

Yet every detail of rehearsal was an anxiety to him. Although he gave a prodigious number of concerts, he was always unusually restless and abstracted on the morning of the day on which he had to perform. He would be idle for hours on his sofa—or, at least, he seemed to be idle—perhaps the works were then being wound up before going to rehearsal—he would then, before starting, take up his violin, examine it carefully, especially the screws, and, having satisfied himself, replace it in its shabby-worn case without striking a note. Lastly, he would sort and arrange the orchestral parts of his solos, and go off to rehearsal. He was very unpunctual, and on one occasion kept the whole band waiting for an hour, and was at last found sheltering from the rain under a colonnade, rather than take a cab. This was in London. At the rehearsal there was always the most intense eagerness on the part of the band to hear him play, and when he came to one of his prodigious cadenzas, the musicians would rise in their seats, and lean forward to watch every movement, and follow every sound. *PAGANINI* would then just play a few common-place notes, stop suddenly, and, turning round to the band, wave his

bow, with a malicious smile, and say, “*Et cætera, Messieurs!*” If anything went wrong he got into a paroxysm of fury; but when things went well he freely showed his satisfaction, and often exclaimed, “*Bravissimo sieti tuni virtuosi!*” He could be very courteous in his manner, and was not personally unpopular with his fellow-musicians, who stood greatly in awe of him. No one ever saw the principal parts of his solos, as he played by heart, for fear of the music being copied. The rehearsal over, he carried even the orchestral parts away with him. He would then go straight home, take a light meal, throw himself on his bed, and sleep profoundly until his carriage arrived to take him to the concert. His toilet was very simple, and took hardly any time; his coat was buttoned tightly over his chest, and marked the more conspicuously the impossible angles of his figure; his trousers hung loose for trousers of the period; his cravat was tight about his neck. He sweated so profusely over his solos, that he always carried a clean shirt in his violin trunk, and changed his linen once at least during the concert. At concert time he usually seemed in excellent spirits. His first question on arriving was always, “Is there a large audience?” If the room was full he would say, “Excellent people! good, good!” If by any chance the boxes were empty he would say, “Some of the effects will be lost.” He kept his audience waiting a long time, and he would sometimes say, “I have played better,” or “I have played worse,” and

occasionally his first solo would be more effective than his last. After once or twice trying the music of KREUTZER and RODE in public, he decided never to play any but his own, and said to his secretary, MR. HARRIS, "I have my own peculiar style; in accordance with this I regulate my compositions. I had much rather write a piece in which I can trust myself entirely to my own musical impressions." "His art," observes M. FÉTIS, "was an art born with him, the secret of which he has carried to the grave."

Some have pretended that, as PAGANINI never cared to play except in public, his art was nothing to him but a means of making money. It would be, perhaps,

278.  
ART AND LIFE.  
nearer the truth to say that his art was so entirely himself, that he did not require, except

at seasons, and chiefly for others, to give it outward expression. He needed no more to play than BEETHOVEN needed to hear. Happier than BEETHOVEN, he was not deprived of the power of realising outwardly the art in which he inwardly lived; but probably the creations of his spirit infinitely outstripped the utmost limits even of his executive powers, until in his eyes they seemed, after all, the faint and inadequate symbols of his wild and inspired dreams. There are times when the deepest feeling is the most silent—music may come to the aid of words; but there is a point at which music itself is a mere beggarly element. What made PAGANINI so exceptionally great was

the portentous development, the strength and independence of the emotional fountain within. The whole of life was to him nothing but so many successions of psychological heat and cold. Incidents immediately became clothed with a psychic atmosphere—perhaps the life of emotion was never so completely realised in itself, and for itself, as in the soul-isolation of PAGANINI. That life, as far as it could be individually expressed, was uttered forth by his violin. On his concert bills he used to put,—

Paganini farà sentire il suo violino.

What the tempest had told him his violin would proclaim ; what the summer night had whispered was stereotyped in his soul, and the midnight song of birds came forth from the Cremona depths at his bidding. Nor was there any phase of passion unknown to him, save, alas ! the phase of a pure and lasting love. His wild soul had early consumed itself with unbridled excesses, and although in his maturer years he grew more sober in such matters, it was not before he had fathomed the perilous depths of more than one *grande passion*, and made himself master of all its subtle expressions.

When, then, we are told that he seldom played, we must remember that his inmost life was itself one vast cosmos of imaginary concord and discord—he *was* music, although only at times “the tides of music’s golden sea” would burst forth with incomparable splendour, and gather a kind of

concrete existence in sound, yet to him his own inspirations were as real—perhaps more real—without it. For music exists apart from physical vibrations, nor can such vibrations, however subtle and varied, express it wholly as it lives in the creative heart. The ear of the soul hears what no ear of sense can hear, and a music fairer than anything on earth is often sounding in the spirit of the true musical seer. Nay, does he not feel, like BEETHOVEN, the bitter descent when he formulates his thoughts upon paper, strikes the keys, or sets in vibration the strings which after all are but feeble apologies for the ideal beauty, the intense, the subtle, or exalted harmonies of the inner life?

Shall we now assist at one of PAGANINI's performances? How many descriptions have been written, and how inade-

279.       quate! It is hardly possible to do more than  
ENTER      describe a few salient peculiarities. But even  
PAGANINI.    our pale sketch would be incomplete without  
such an attempt.

Enter PAGANINI—a shudder of curiosity and excitement runs through the crowded theatre, the men applaud, the women concentrate a double-barrel fire of opera-glasses upon the tall, ungainly figure that shuffles forward from the side scenes to the foot-lights, with such an air of haughtiness, and yet so many mechanical bows. As the applause rises again and again, the apparition stands still, looks round, takes in at a glance the vast assembly. Then,

seizing his violin, he hugs it tightly between his chin and chest, and stands for a few seconds gazing at it in motionless abstraction. The audience is now completely hushed, and all eyes are riveted upon one silent and almost grotesque form. Suddenly PAGANINI raises his bow and dashes it down like a sledge-hammer upon the strings. The opening of the concerto abounds in solo passages, in which he has to be left almost without accompaniment; the orchestra is reserved for the *tutti*s and slight interludes. PAGANINI now revels in his distinctive and astonishing passages, which hold the audience breathless. At one time torrents of chords peal forth, as from some mimic orchestra; harmonic passages are thrown off with the sharpness and sonority of the flute accompanied by the guitar, independent phrases being managed by the left hand plucking the strings, whilst the right is playing legato passages with the bow. The most difficult intervals are spanned with ease—the immense, compass-like fingers glide up and down every part of the key-board, and seem to be in ever so many places at once. Heavy chords are struck indifferently with the point or heel of the bow, as if each inch of the magic wand were equally under control; but just when these prodigious feats of skill are causing the senses to reel with something like a painful strain, a low, measured melody steals forth and penetrates the souls of all present, until some of the audience break out into uncontrollable applause, whilst others are melted to tears, overpowered by the thrilling

accents. Then, attenuated as it were to a thread—but still distinctly audible and resonant—the divine sound would die away; and suddenly a grotesque flash of humour would dart up from a lower sphere and shift the emotional atmosphere, as the great maestro too soon dashes, with the impetuosity of a whirlwind, into the final “rondo” or “moto perpetuo.”

PAGANINI was not inexorable about encores—he was always gratified by applause. After the concert the people often waited outside to accompany him to his hotel. He seemed delighted with this kind of homage, and would go out at such seasons and mix freely with them; but he was often quite inaccessible, and bent upon absolute seclusion.

Let us now resume the chronological narrative. Towards the end of 1812, PAGANINI quarrelled with his royal patroness, the GRAND DUCHESS OF TUSCANY.

280.  
HIS INDEPENDENCE. She had given him leave, as above mentioned, to wear at Court the uniform of captain of the body-guard, and one night he appeared in the orchestra attired in this splendid costume. The Duchess seems to have thought this inappropriate, and sent word desiring him to change his uniform for an ordinary dress. The offended artist declined point-blank, and that evening threw up his appointment and left the Florentine Court and all its works for ever. It is not at all improbable that PAGANINI, who could now command any sum of money, had

grown tired of official duties, which could no longer shed any new lustre upon him, and that, longing to be free, he gladly availed himself of the first ready pretext for flight. In vain his royal mistress sent after him, imploring him to return. PAGANINI was inexorable, and it was even whispered that the Duchess's entreaties were prompted by a feeling still more tender than the love of music—a feeling which PAGANINI had ceased to reciprocate.

PAGANINI was very fond of Milan, and he stayed there during the greater part of 1813. He visited that city three times in five years, staying often for several months, and giving in all thirty-seven concerts, most of them at the Scala.

It was in 1814 that he first made the acquaintance of ROSSINI at Bologna. The great composer, like every other connoisseur, regarded him with admiration and astonishment, and a friendship was then begun which was strengthened when the two celebrities met in 1817 at Rome, and in 1831 at Paris.

PAGANINI treated his fellow-musicians and rivals with simple and unaffected courtesy. He expressed his great

281. admiration of SPOHR's violin-playing, and he

PAGANINI  
AND SPOHR  
AND LAFONT went all the way from Genoa to Milan to hear LAFONT. When they met, LAFONT proposed that they should give a concert, in which each should play a solo. "I excused myself," says PAGANINI,

"by saying that such experiments are always impolitic, as the public invariably looked upon them as duels. LAFONT, not seeing it in this light, I was compelled to accept the challenge." Commenting upon the results, he added with singular candour and modesty : "LAFONT probably surpassed me in tone, but the applause which followed my efforts convinced me that I did not suffer by comparison." Although usually anxious, more for the sake of others than for himself, to avoid such contests, he never declined them ; and a similar trial of skill took place between him and the Polish violinist, LAPRINSKI, in 1818, at Plaisance, the two artists remaining excellent friends.

At this time PAGANINI's health seems to have been in an unusually critical condition. We have noticed that he seldom consulted doctors, and when he did so <sup>282.</sup> he was not in the habit of following their advice ; <sub>HIS HEALTH.</sub> but his credulity was worse than his scepticism. He dosed himself immoderately with some stuff called "Leroy" ; he believed that this could cure anything. It usually produced a powerful agitation in his nervous system, and generally ended in upsetting the intestinal functions. Sometimes it seems to have deprived him of the power of speech.

In 1816 he went to Venice, where he seems fairly to

have collapsed after giving a few concerts. However, in  
283. the following year (1817) he was much better,  
LETTER  
FROM HIS  
MOTHER. and went to Genoa to see his mother, taking  
Milan *en route*. He has been called avaricious,  
suspicious of his kind, and devoid of natural affection.  
He, no doubt, loved money, and had a general distrust of  
his friends, but it is certain that he was attached to his  
mother, and took care to supply her with every comfort.  
She writes to him some years later :—

I am delighted to find that after your travels to Paris and London,  
you purpose visiting Genoa expressly to embrace me. My dream has  
been fulfilled, and that which God promised me has been accomplished  
—your name is great, and Art, with the help of God, has placed you in  
a position of independence. We are all well. In the name of all your  
relations I thank you for the sums of money you have sent. Omit  
nothing that will render your name immortal. Eschew the vices of  
great cities, remembering that you have a mother who loves you affec-  
tionately. She will never cease her supplications to the All-powerful  
for your preservation. Embrace your amiable companion for me, and  
kiss little Achille. Love me as I love you.

Your ever-affectionate mother,

TERESA PAGANINI.

The “amiable companion” seems to have been a canta-  
trice, ANTONIA BLANCHI DI COMO, with whom he appears to  
have lived at one time, and who bore him his only son, “the  
little Achille.”

In the same year, 1817, he arrived in Rome in time for  
the Carnival, where he excited the greatest enthusiasm.

He was frequently to be found at the palace of COUNT DE KAUNITZ, the Austrian Ambassador, where he met all the great people in Rome, and among them M. DE METTERNICH, who did his utmost to persuade him to visit Vienna. From this time PAGANINI determined, sooner or later, to visit the principal cities in Germany and France, but the state of his health was still very precarious. In 1818-19 he gave concerts at Verona, Plaisance, Turin, and Florence, after which he visited Naples for the first time. His advent had been long looked for with feelings of jealous expectation and distrust. The chief professors and musicians of the place, who had never heard him, were not very favourably disposed. They, however, gave him a reception, on which occasion a piece of music was casually placed before him, full of the most ingenious difficulties that could be devised. PAGANINI was not unaccustomed to this kind of trap, and upon being requested to play it at sight, he merely glanced at it and played it off with the greatest ease.

But he had even worse foes than the professors. He seems to have got into damp apartments close under St. Elmo, and his lungs, at no time very strong, now showed unmistakable signs of consumption. The landlord, fearing that he would die in his house, actually turned him and all he possessed out into

284.  
VISIT TO  
NAPLES.

INHUMAN  
TREATMENT.

TRAVELS.

the street, where his friend, CIANDELLI, happening to come by at the very nick of time, administered a sound thrashing to the brutal host with a stick, and took the invalid artist to a more comfortable lodging. In 1820 he returned to his favourite city, Milan, where he founded a musical society, conducted several concerts, and received various crowns, medals, and decorations. In December of the same year he returned to Rome, and in the following year, 1821, paid a second visit to Naples, giving concerts at the Fondo and the Theatre Nuovo. At the end of the year he crossed over to Sicily, but the people of Palermo hardly appreciated him; and in 1822 he is again at Venice and Plaisance. From thence he would have gone straight to Germany, in accordance with the proposals of METTERNICH; but on his way to Pavia, in 1823, he was attacked by his old complaint, and for some time it did not seem likely that he would recover. He was advised to go to Genoa for rest, and whilst there he recovered sufficiently to give concerts at the Theatre St. Augustine, when the prophet in his own country for once attracted enthusiastic crowds. The Milanese, who had never expected to see him alive again, gave him an enthusiastic reception at the Scala, on the 12th of June 1824. He seems to have been still unable to tear himself away from Italy, for in the same month he returned to Genoa, then passed to Venice, and in 1825 he was at Trieste. Then he proceeded, for the third time, to Naples, and going over to Palermo, for the second

time, he now met with a most astonishing success. He remained in Sicily for a whole year, and seems in this delicious climate to have recovered his health sufficiently to undertake a long professional tour. He was then detained in Italy for nearly two years more, for in 1826 he visited again Trieste, Venice, and gave five concerts at Rome. In 1827 he was decorated by POPE LEO XII. with the Order of the Golden Spur. He then repaired to Florence, where a disease in one of his legs stopped his progress for several months. It was only in the spring of 1828 that he went on to Milan, where he at length gave his farewell concert, before starting on his long-projected visit to Vienna.

To dwell upon the reports of his first appearance at Vienna would be only to repeat what has already been

286.

TRIUMPHS  
AT VIENNA.

said. "The first note that he played on his Guarnerius," writes M. SCHILLING in the *Lexique Universel de Musique*, "indeed, from his first step into the room, his reputation was decided in Germany. Acted upon, as by an electric spark, a brilliant halo of glory appeared to invest his whole person, he stood before us like a miraculous apparition in the domain of Art!" He gave concerts in the capital of Austria on the 13th, 16th, and 18th of April 1828. The greatest players and musicians from all parts flocked to hear him. MAYSEDER, JANSKA, SLAWICH, STREBINGER, BÖHM,

united in extolling the new prodigy. In a very few days Vienna seemed to be turned upside down—no class of people was unmoved by the presence of this extraordinary man. The newspapers were full of verses and articles on PAGANINI. Cravats, coats, gloves, hats, shoes, and even cigar-cases and snuff-boxes—everything was now *à la Paganini*. The fashionable cooks called new dishes by his name; any great stroke at billiards was a *coup à la Paganini*.

He stayed several months at Vienna, but time did not injure his popularity; his talent bore the most critical inspection all round,—he was at once colossal in the breadth and majesty of his effects, and microscopic in the perfection and subtlety of his details. At the acme of his fame he left Vienna, and commenced a tour through Austria, Bohemia, Saxony, Poland, Bavaria, Prussia, and the Rhenish Provinces. Prague was the only city which failed to appreciate him. There was a stupid rivalry, of which we find traces in the days of MOZART, between Vienna and Prague, and it was generally understood that whoever was applauded at Vienna was to be hissed at Prague, and *vice versa*. But on reaching Berlin the great artist was received with such an ovation, that he is said to have exclaimed, on his first appearance, “Here is my Vienna public!”

From this time to the end of his life, the wildest stories

began to be circulated about him, chiefly in the Italian and French newspapers; but the *Leipzig Gazette 287.* *PAGANINI du Monde Élégant* cannot be held quite blameless, for it inserted one of the most extravagant of these tales. One man gravely affirmed that PAGANINI's miracles of skill were no longer to be wondered at, because he had seen the devil standing close behind him moving his arms for him. Another eye-witness wrote that he had for some time observed a beautiful woman at PAGANINI's concerts; he went to the theatre in the hope of again seeing her on the occasion of PAGANINI's last performance. The master appeared, played divinely; the house was crammed, but where was the lady? Presently—in one of the soft pauses—a deep sigh was heard, it proceeded from the beautiful lady; tears were streaming down her cheeks, a mysterious person was seated by her side, with whom PAGANINI exchanged a ghastly smile; the lady and her cavalier soon rose; the strange cavalier grasped her hand—she grew deadly pale; they proceed out of the theatre; in a narrow by-path stands a carriage with coal-black steeds—the horses' eyes seem on fire—the two enter, the carriage vanishes—where, apparently, there is no road at all, the inference of all which is that PAGANINI was in league with the devil! It is strange but true that these absurd legends gained some credence amongst the ignorant populace of Italy and France, though they were probably laughed at in Germany.

But other stories of a different kind annoyed him far more. He was a ruffian who had murdered one mistress,

288. and decamped with another man's wife ; he was

PAGANINI'S an escaped convict ; he was a political busy-body.  
MORALS.

He was a spy, a thief, an immoral swindler ; he had been in prison, it was said, for years, and had thus learned his skill upon one string, all the others having got broken. It is necessary, even at this time of day, to give a distinct denial to this last legend. PAGANINI's morals were not above, but they were not below, the average of the somewhat dissolute state of society in which it was his misfortune to have been born and bred. He never committed a murder, or fought a duel, or betrayed a friend, or left without provision those whom he had given just claims upon him. As to politics, he knew nothing and cared nothing for them ; and he never read the newspapers except when they contained something about himself. In Paris they pasted up a coarse woodcut of PAGANINI chained in a dungeon about the walls and hoardings of the city. PAGANINI describes himself as having stood before it in mute astonishment, until a crowd gathered round him, and, recognising the likeness, mobbed and hustled him in the most inconvenient manner. It was these reports that he afterwards bitterly complained of, and M. FÉTIS, at his request, drew up a letter, which was afterwards published throughout Europe, in which the aggrieved violinist vindicates his character from the current calumnies. His protestations, however, were far from stilling the

rumours, and, when he arrived in London, some years later, there was no absurd and extravagant tale about him that was not eagerly caught up and circulated throughout the length and breadth of the land. A lesser man might have courted this sort of notoriety, but *PAGANINI*, who could do without it, was intensely annoyed and wounded. We cannot follow the great violinist in detail through his German campaign, in the years 1828-29-30, but some notion of his way of life may draw his personality a little closer to the reader ere we prepare to greet him on our own shores.

Ill health, at times acute suffering, which turned his pale bony face to a green livid hue, an intensely susceptible

289. nervous system, an outward life alternating  
*PAGANINI'S* between scenes of highly-wrought excitement,  
TEMPERA-  
MENT. amazing exertion, and fitful repose—these causes combined to produce a character singular for its mingled abstraction and plasticity. At times he seemed in the body, at other times out of the body—sometimes he appeared to be only semi-conscious of life; at other times more intensely conscious than any dozen people put together. Physical causes acted at times oddly and instantly upon his brain; at others they found him like stone. He was not always open to impressions, which at certain moments would find him so receptive that he became the utter incarnation of them. He was full of contradictions, which he cared little to explain either to himself or to others. He travelled

with the utmost speed from place to place; in the hottest weather he would have all the carriage windows closed. Although latterly his lungs affected his voice, which became thin and feeble, he delighted to talk loudly when rattling over the roads; the noise of the wheels seemed to excite him, and set his brain going. He never entered an inn on the road, but would sit in his carriage until the horses were ready, or walk up and down wrapped in his great cloak, and resent being spoken to. Arrived at his hotel, he would throw all his doors and windows open, and take what he called an air bath; but he never ceased to abuse the climate of Germany, and said that Italy was the only place fit to live in. His luggage was extremely simple—a small napkin might have contained the whole of his wardrobe—a coat, a little linen, and a hat-box—a small carpet bag, a shabby trunk, containing his Guarnerius violin, his jewels, a clean shirt, and his money—that was all. He carried papers of immense value in a red pocket-book, along with concert tickets, letters, and accounts. These last no one but himself could read, as he knew hardly any arithmetic, and calculated, but with great accuracy, on some method of his own. He cared little where he slept, and seldom noticed what he ate or drank. He never complained of the inns—every place seemed much alike to him—out of Italy; he detested them all equally. He seldom noticed scenery, or paid attention to the sights of foreign towns. To himself he was the only

important fact everywhere. He often started without food in the early morning, and remained fasting all day. At night he would take a light supper, and some camomile tea, and sleep soundly until morning. At times he ate ravenously. He remained taciturn for days, and then he would have all his meals sent up to his room; but at some hotels he would dine at the table d'hôte, and join freely in conversation. He lay on his sofa doing nothing the greater part of every day; but when making plans for the publication of his works or the founding of a musical institution, which at one time occupied much of his thoughts, he would stride up and down his room, and talk in a rapid and animated manner. After dinner he habitually sat in his room in total darkness until half-past ten, when he went to bed. Sometimes from sixty to eighty people, eager to see him, would wait upon him at his hotel in the course of the day. When compelled to see visitors, he was polite; but the intrusion of strangers fatigued and annoyed him, and he often refused himself to everyone. He would bolt his door, and not take the least notice of any knocks.

He would sit for hours almost motionless in a kind of trance, and apparently absorbed in deep thought; but he was not always averse to society. He was fond of conversing with a few friends, and entered into whatever games and recreations were going on with much zest; but if anyone mentioned music, he would relapse into a sullen silence,

or go off to some other part of the room. He disliked dining out; but when he accepted he usually ate largely of everything on the table, after which he was generally attacked by his old bowel-complaint. At the time, however, he would eat and drink largely without any inconvenience. Although he mixed freely with the world, like CHOPIN, he was a solitary man, and reserved to the last degree. No one seemed to be in his confidence. He had an excellent memory—yet certain faces seemed to pass from him absolutely. His fidelity to both his parents was not the least remarkable point in his strange character, and although ardently attached to money, he could be generous at the call of what he considered duty, and even lavish when charity was concerned—indeed, he frequently gave concerts for the benefit of the poor, remembering the time when he had been a poor man himself.

Paris, always eager for novelty, the self-elected critic of the civilised world in all matters appertaining to art, was

290. by this time imperative in her demand to see  
AT PARIS. and hear PAGANINI; so, early in the spring  
of 1831, he set out for that fashionable capital.

Fame had preceded him with every kind of strange rumour—he could not only play on one string, it was said, but his fiddle still gave forth strange music when all the strings were removed. The old calumnies revived. The town was placarded with villainous wood-cuts of him in prison—

others represented him in caricature, playing on one string. In short, expectation was wound up to its highest pitch, when he suddenly arrived, in bad health, and immediately gave a performance at the Opera-House, on March 9th, 1831. The calm and judicious veteran of the Royal Conservatory of Music in Belgium, M. FÉTIS, who knew him well, and heard him often, and to whose work I am so much indebted for the present sketch, can find no other words to express the sensation which he created on his first appearance at Paris than “universal frenzy.” The whole city flocked to hear him, the professors and virtuosi crowded round him on the platform, as near as they dared approach, in order to watch him play, after which they were no wiser than before. At the end of each piece the whole audience, it is said, rose *en masse* to recall him; the tongue of envy forgot to wag, and rivalry was put out of court. It was hoped he might have thrown some light upon certain prodigious violin studies which he had published, and which had long been known at Paris. No one could play them, or even conjecture how some of them were to be played; nor did PAGANINI reveal the secret, which lay, no doubt, partly in a peculiar way of tuning the instrument, as well as in a length and agility of finger which he alone possessed.

About the middle of May he left Paris for London, and the *Times* newspaper, which, at that time, hardly ever

noticed concerts, devoted half a column in a vain attempt  
to give some idea of his first performance at  
291. <sup>PAGANINI</sup> the King's Theatre. <sup>IN LONDON.</sup> PAGANINI, to save himself  
trouble, had agreed, for an enormous sum  
of money, to let himself to a speculator during his stay  
in England, who made all arrangements for him and  
took the proceeds. This plan has since been adopted by  
several illustrious artists, M. JOACHIM amongst them;  
and, although it has been stigmatized as wanting in  
dignity, it is probably, on the whole, the most satis-  
factory to the artist, though not always to the public.  
An attempt was made to double the prices at the Opera-  
House, which raised great indignation: the prices ultimately  
charged were the usual Opera charges—no more and no  
less—and this was doubtless thought exorbitant for a con-  
cert, although the solo performer was supported by an  
orchestra and some of the best Opera singers, the famous  
LABLACHE amongst them. The crowd at the doors on the  
first night was excessive, and the pit was full to overflowing,  
but the boxes were thin. PAGANINI was suffering at that  
time from the inroads of his old complaint, aggravated by  
the rapid encroachments of his last fatal malady, consump-  
tion. He appeared contrary to the advice of his physicians,  
and was received with the usual tumult of applause. From  
a heap of contemporary criticism struggling vainly with the  
difficulty of the subject, we extract a few passages from the  
pen of an eye-witness, which strike us as unusually graphic.

MR. GARDNER, of Leicester, writes: "At the hazard of my ribs, I placed myself at the Opera two hours and a half before the concert began. . . . The concert

292.

THE CRITICS opened with BEETHOVEN'S second symphony,  
AT SEA.

admirably played by the Philharmonic band, after which LABLACHE sang 'Largo al Factotum,' with much applause, and was encored. A breathless silence, and every eye was watching the action of this extraordinary violinist; and as he glided from the side scenes to the front of the stage, an involuntary cheering burst from every part of the house, many rising from their seats to view the Spectre during the thunder of this unprecedented cheering—his gaunt and extraordinary appearance being more like that of a devotee about to suffer martyrdom than one to delight you with his art. With the tip of his bow he sent off the orchestra in a grand military movement with a force and vivacity as surprising as it was new. At the termination of this introduction he commenced with a soft streaming note of celestial quality, and with three or four whips of his bow elicited points of sound that mounted to the third heaven and as bright as the stars. . . . He has long legs and arms, and his hands in his playing often assume the attitude of prayer, with the fingers pointed upwards. It was curious to watch the faces of LINDLEY, DRAGONETTI, and the other great players, who took up places on the platform to command a good view of him during his performance—they all seem to have agreed that

the like had never been heard before, and that in addition to his marvellous eccentricities and novel effects, he had transcended the highest level of legitimate art that had ever been reached."

It has often been asked in what respects PAGANINI's playing differed from that of other great violinists  
293. —in what has he enriched the art—what has  
PAGANINI'S SPECIALITIES. he discovered or invented? These questions have been to some extent answered by the painstaking Professor of Music, GUHR, who had many opportunities of watching him closely.

He was peculiar, first, in his manner of tuning. Sometimes the first three strings were tuned half a note higher, the G string being a third lower. Sometimes he tuned his G to B; with a single turn of his peg he would change the pitch of his G string, and never fail in his intonation. These artifices explain, no doubt, many of his extraordinary intervals.

Secondly, in his management of the bow he has had many imitators, though none have approached him in the romantic variety and "fiend-like power with which he ruled over the strings." His ordinary *staccato*, played with a very tight bow, was prodigiously loud and firm, like the strokes of a hammer, whilst his method of dashing the bow on the strings, and letting it leap through an infinity of tiny staccato notes with unerring precision was wholly his own invention.

Thirdly, his *tremolo* use of the left hand exceeded anything which had been attempted up to that time. This effect has been, like every other one of his inimitable effects, driven to death by subsequent violinists.

Fourth, his use of harmonics now universally known to violinists, was then absolutely new—formerly only the open harmonics had been used, and that very charily; but PAGANINI astonished the world by stopping the string with the first finger, and extracting the harmonic simultaneously with the fourth. By sliding up the first finger together with the fourth, he played entire melodies in harmonics, and got, on an average, about three octaves out of each string; his use of double harmonics in rapid passages, and such trifles as four simultaneous A flats, are still problems which few, if any hands but his, have been able to solve.

Lastly, his habit of plucking the strings, sometimes with the right, sometimes with the left hand, and producing those rapid *pizzicato* runs, on an accompaniment of a harp or guitar, was absolutely new; beyond these things it was found impossible much farther to analyse his playing. His secret, if he had any, died with him; his music does not reveal it. Although he wrote quartettes, solos, duetts, and sonatas, fragments of about twenty-four of which are in existence, only nine were found complete; of these the Rondo known as “*Clochette*,” and often played by M. SIVORI, and “*Le Streghe*,” are perhaps the best known.

The celebrated variations on the “Carnival de Venise” do not appear to have been published as he played them, though both ERNST and SIVORI claim to play the Paganini Carnival. M. FÉTIS considers his finest compositions have not been preserved—amongst those he reckons a magnificent concerto played at Paris in 1813, and a grand military sonata for the fourth string only.

The rest of PAGANINI’s story is soon told. Broken in health, after an absence of six years, he returned to Italy,

294.  
LOSSES.

where he was now nearly worshipped by his countrymen. He had grown immensely rich, and bought various properties in Tuscany. He played at concerts from time to time, and was always most generous in giving his talents for the benefit of the poor.

MR. DUBOURG, in his valuable work on the violin, asserts that he went to America; but of this I can find no trace in the biography of M. FÉTIS, nor in any other documents which I have as yet come across. In 1835 PAGANINI lived much between Milan and Genoa. The DUCHESS OF PARMA had conferred the order of St. George on him in 1834.

In 1836 he got into bad hands. He lent his great name to the establishment of a Casino in Paris, which failed. He was obliged to go to Paris, and the journey, no doubt, hastened his end. His consumption grew worse, he could not bear the cold; he was annoyed by the un-

scrupulous speculators, who tried to involve him in their own ruin, and then refused to bear the burden with him. They even succeeded in mulcting him in the sum of 50,000 francs, and he was actually detained by legal proceedings until he had paid the whole sum.

But his days of speculation and glory were alike numbered. In 1839 he was a dying man. He struggled with indomitable energy against his deadly foe. He now often

295.      took up the guitar, which, in the spring-time  
THE NIGHT of his life, had been so intimately associated  
COMETH.      with his first romantic attachment. He was a  
great admirer of BEETHOVEN, and not long before his  
death he played one of that master's quartettes, his  
favourite one, with astonishing energy. In extreme weak-  
ness, he laboured out to hear a requiem of CHERUBINI  
for male voices, and soon afterwards, with all his last  
energies, he insisted upon being conveyed to one of the  
churches in Marseilles, where he took part in a solemn mass  
of BEETHOVEN. His voice was now nearly extinct, and his  
sleep, that greatest of consolations, was broken up by  
dreadful fits of coughing, his features began to sink, and  
he appeared to be little more than a living skeleton, so  
excessive and fearful was his emaciation. Still he did not  
believe in the approach of death. Day by day he grew  
more restless, and talked of passing the winter at Nice, and  
he did live on till the spring.

On the night of May 27, 1840, after a protracted paroxysm, he suddenly became strangely tranquil. He

sank into a quiet sleep, and woke refreshed and  
296. calm. The air was soft and warm. He desired  
THE END. them to open the windows wide, draw the

curtains of his bed, and allow the moon, just rising in the unclouded glory of an Italian sky, to flood his apartment. He sat gazing intently upon it for some minutes, and then again sank drowsily into a fitful sleep. Rousing himself once more, his fine ear caught the sound of the rustling leaves as they were gently stirred by some breath of air outside. In his dying moments this sound of the night wind in the trees seemed to affect him strangely, and the summer nights on the banks of the Arno long ago may have flashed back upon his mind, and called up fading memories. But now the Arno was exchanged for the wide Mediterranean Sea, all ablaze with light. MOZART in his last moments pointed to the score of the Requiem, which lay before him on his bed, and his lips were moving, to indicate the effect of kettledrums in a particular place, as he sank back in a swoon; and it is recorded of PAGANINI that on that fair moonlight night in May, as the last dimness came over his eyes, he stretched out his hand to grasp his faithful friend and companion, his Guarnerius violin, and as he struck its chords once more, and found that it ceased to speak with its old magic power, he himself sank back and expired, like one broken-hearted

to find that a little feeble, confused noise was all that was now left of those strains that he had created and the world had worshipped.

He left £80,000 to his son, BARON ACHILLE PAGANINI, and about £45 a year to ANTONIA BIANCHI, with whom he had long since quarrelled. He had previously provided for his mother. His violin he left to his native city, Genoa, with directions that no other artist should ever play upon it.

We have no heart to dwell upon the wretched strife over his dead body. PAGANINI, who had no great opinion of  
297. the Catholic religion or the Catholic priests,  
OVER THE died without confession and the last sacraments.  
DEAD. He was, accordingly, refused burial in con-

secrated ground by the Bishop of Parma. For a long time his corpse remained at a room in the hospital at Nice. The body then lay for four years at Villa Franca, when, owing, it was affirmed, to the ghostly violin sounds that were heard about the coffin, his son, by paying large sums of money, got permission to bury his father with funeral rites in the village church near what had been his favourite residence, the Villa Gajona. This last tribute was tardily paid to the ashes of the immortal musician in May of 1845.







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